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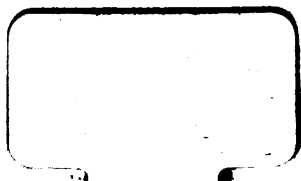
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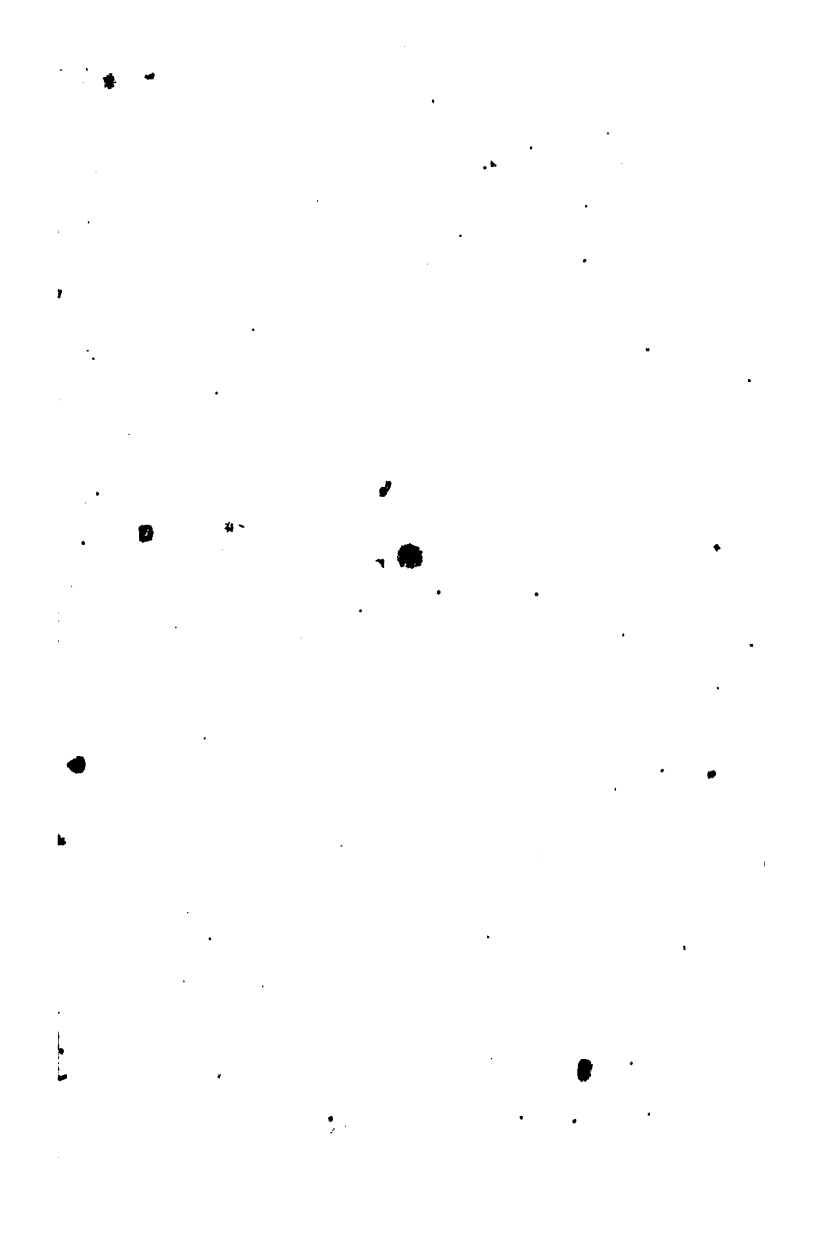


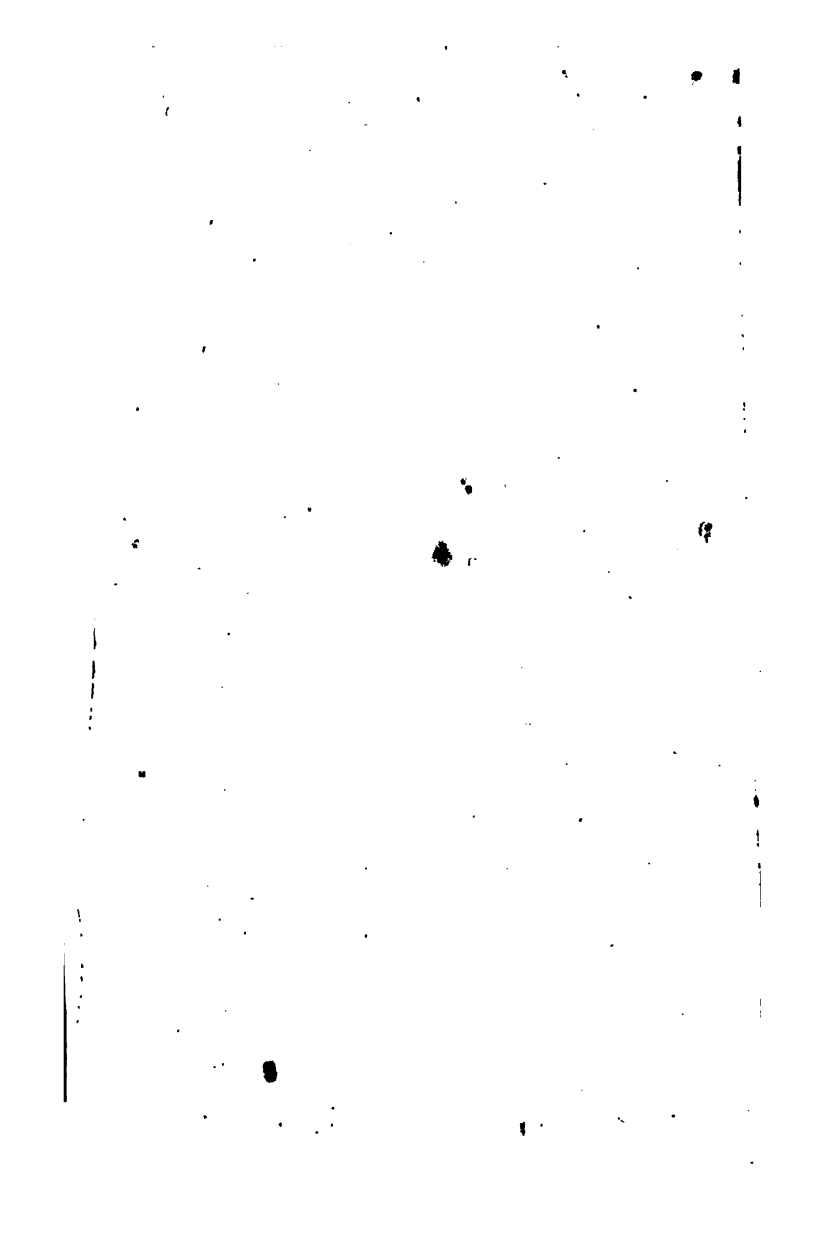
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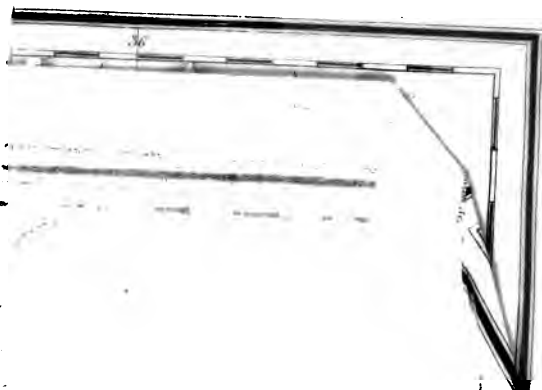








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VOL. III.
THE HOLY LAND.

CAMBRIDGE:
JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.
1834.

From the subject of

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THE

HOLY LAND

AND

ITS INHABITANTS.

*Stephen
Stephens*
BY S. G. BULFINCH.

CAMBRIDGE:

JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.

1834.

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THE
HOLY LAND.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF PALESTINE.

“So passed they on
O'er Judah's hills, and wheresoe'er the leaves
Of the broad sycamore made sounds at noon,
Like lulling rain-drops, or the olive-boughs,
With their cool dimness, crossed the sultry blue
Of Syria's heaven. — At last the Fane was reached,
The Earth's One Sanctuary.”

Mrs. Hemans.

THERE is an interest, natural to all, in the contemplation of ancient states. Our hearts are formed to sympathize with the whole human family. It is this capacity which invests with such deep interest works of fiction, tales of imaginary enjoyment and suffering. It is this which renders biography one of the most attractive, as it often is one of the most improving, studies. A

similar interest attaches itself to the contemplation of mankind in large communities of our own or of distant lands. But there is a peculiar pleasure when we investigate the manners and customs of ancient nations, enter in fancy the long-deserted mansions of past ages, trace their peculiarities, and hold converse with the great, and wise, and good, who have long since passed away.

The object of this little work is to exhibit, with as much of interest as its condensed form will admit, the history, the laws, the religious rites, the domestic customs, of that land and that people whose record is the word of God. It is its aim, young and gentle reader ! to lead you into the mansions of the ancient Hebrews, to view with you their domestic arrangements, to go out into their streets, and place you among the judges sitting in the gates of the city ; to go up with you to their magnificent temple, that you may listen to the anthem of the Levites, and mark the smoke ascending from the altar, the vestments of the High Priest, and " what manner of stones and what buildings were there."

History presents no field equal in the richness of its stores to the one before us. The traveller may pause and meditate on the plains of Greece,

and feel that her departed wise and great have left a portion of their spirit in the air they once breathed, the footsteps of their power on the soil they once trod ; but is there not a holier feeling, the consciousness of a loftier presence, to the pilgrim standing on the hill of Zion, within the scenes of David's power ? What classic recollections can equal those which, to the Christian, render Palestine another home, and Jerusalem his "city of the soul?" In those streets his Saviour taught ; among the olives on that hill he withdrew to meditate with his disciples ; in yonder village he wept over his buried friend, then spoke the word of power, and the grave gave up its dead ; in that garden he poured forth the prayer of agony ; on that hill he died. Let the Christian often wander through scenes like these, that his interest in the word of God, his knowledge, his piety may be increased.

Palestine, or the Holy Land, is a region of about a hundred miles in breadth, and rather more than two hundred long. It lies at the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea, which forms its western boundary. To the south and east lies Arabia, a vast country, of which the portion bordering on the Holy Land is generally barren. Edom or Idumea, which formerly inter-

vened between Palestine and Arabia on the south, may be now regarded as merely a part of Arabia. Here commences the rugged and mountainous district, known by the name of Arabia Petræa, or the rocky, while Arabia Deserta bounds Palestine on the East. The northern limit of the Holy Land is formed by Syria, anciently called Aram, which extends from Mount Lebanon to the river Euphrates. Frequently the name of Syria is used in an extended sense, embracing Palestine itself, which has frequently been connected with it under the same government. Syria, at its north-eastern termination, is bounded by Mesopotamia, or Aram Naharaim. These names, which in Greek and Hebrew have nearly the same meaning (the country between the rivers), have been adopted, from the situation of the country, between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. Mesopotamia bore, also, from its level character, the name Padan Aram, or the Plains of Aram. South-east of this province, and including a portion of the country between the rivers, lay Chaldea or Babylonia, while Assyria bounded it on the north-east. Beyond these respectively extended Media and Persia. The whole, from Syria to the Caspian Sea on the north, and the Indian Ocean on the south, constituted sometimes sep-

arate kingdoms, and sometimes a single empire, which bore collectively the name of the province from which the family who governed it had originated. Thus in succession arose within the same territories, the dynasties of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian monarchs.

Extending our view westward from the Holy Land, a prospect of still greater interest expands before us. In how small a portion of our earth's surface do we find that all which was most valuable to our race, was for ages on ages concentrated. Here lies Egypt, from which civilization first dawned on Greece; there Greece itself, its peninsula, its islands, and the opposite coast of Asia Minor, where every science and every art suited to refine and elevate human nature, arose to a perfection which excites the wonder of the modern observer. There again is Phœnicia, the parent of commerce, the country whose adventurous mariners first passed the bounds of the Mediterranean, and navigated south, even beyond the equator; and here is the land rendered sacred by the steps of prophets and sages, rendered far more sacred and more dear by the life and labors of the Son of God. Remove from the map of the world those few countries round the eastern ex-

tremity of the Mediterranean, and you destroy ancient history, and modern science and religion.

The name of Canaan, by which the country before us was in early times distinguished, was given on account of its occupation by the descendants of the grandson of Noah who bore that name. It received the designation of Palestine from the Philistines, a tribe of its early inhabitants, who withstood longer than any other, the power of the Israelites. They were a branch of the Canaanites and closely connected with the Phœnicians. The country has received, from well-known peculiarities in its history, the names of "the Land of Promise," and "the Holy Land;" "the Land of the Hebrews," "the Land of Israel," and "Judea."

Upon inspecting a map, the most remarkable feature will at once be recognised in the river Jordan and the lakes which it connects. It was formerly believed that this river originated in a small lake, called Phiala, at the foot of Mount Lebanon, — that it pursued thence a subterraneous course for nearly fourteen miles, till it burst forth at length near Paneas, or Cæsarea Philippi. This account, however, is not confirmed by the statements of recent travellers, and the true

source of the river appears to be not far from Paneas. About thirteen miles thence it discharges itself into lake Merom, a sheet of water, in winter, seven miles long by three and a half in breadth, but in summer only a marsh, sowed in parts with rice, but elsewhere covered with shrubs and rushes, which are the resting-place of wild beasts. Some miles below lake Merom, the river enters lake Gennesareth, called also the Sea of Galilee or of Tiberias, a sheet of water, about sixteen miles long and five or six broad. This fine expanse, surrounded on all sides by wild mountain scenery and often agitated by storms, would be from its native grandeur alone an object of great interest to the traveller, but it derives still higher attractions from its connexion with the history of Jesus. Here it was that much of our Saviour's public life was spent. On the western shore of the lake was Capernaum, where he was an inmate in the house of Peter's mother-in-law, whom he had cured of a fever.* Near Capernaum was Bethsaida of Galilee, where dwelt the apostles Andrew, Philip, and Peter.† Chorazin lay near, which our Lord so reproachfully addressed, in connexion with the two cities just

* Mark i. 29, 30, &c. ii. 1.

† John i. 44.

named, for the neglect with which his mighty works had been beheld.* Another Bethsaida, also called Julias, stood on the north-eastern shore of the lake. In the desert country not far from this place, Jesus miraculously fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes, † and hence it was that he returned across the lake on that memorable night when he walked on the waves, and tried the faith of Peter by permitting him to follow his example.‡ The cities of Gerasa or Gergesa and Gadara, with the region in their vicinity called indiscriminately the country of the Gergasenes or Gadarenes, extended southward of Julias, and formed a part of the region called Decapolis or "the ten cities." § Dalmanutha lay near, and Magdala, whence probably came that Mary who is spoken of in the New Testament with the distinctive title of Magdalene.|| On the eastern shore of the lake was Tiberias, built by Herod Antipas and named in honor of the emperor Tiberius. It was the metropolis of Galilee, and after the overthrow of the Jewish government, became the residence of a line of patriarchs, who exercised a species of paternal authority over the dispersed Israelites.

* Mat. xi. 21. † Luke ix. 10. ‡ Mat. xiv. 22-33.

§ Mat. iv. 25; Mark v. 20. || Mat. xxviii. 1.

We now follow the course of the river, from its egress from the sea of Galilee, through a winding course of about sixty miles, till it enters the Dead Sea, the Salt Sea, Lake Asphaltites, or the Sea of the Plain, sixty-seven miles from north to south, and seventeen in its greatest breadth from west to east. The scene now before us has been rendered remarkable by an interposition of divine justice, which, excepting the general deluge, is the most fearful recorded in sacred history. The Dead Sea was not always what it now is. Once the space it occupies was full of beauty and life. Here stood the flourishing cities of the plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar. Around them lay the vale of Siddim, remarkable for the slimy nature of its soil,* but from that very cause fertile to excess, "well watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt."† But this beauty stood on a foundation which was literally to give way beneath it. It is probable that in the most ancient times, the Jordan, after passing through the midst of the vale of Siddim, pursued its course to the Red Sea through a wild ravine, called by the Arabs El Ghor and El Araba, and known in the wars

* Gen. xiv. 10.

† Gen. xiii. 10.

between the Jews and Edomites by the name of the Valley of Salt.* But the water, mingling with and undermining the soil of the plain of Siddim, became absorbed to such a degree that its channel thence to the Red Sea was left dry, while the region round Sodom and Gomorrah acquired a superabundant fertility from the stream which was gradually sapping its foundations. At length the wickedness of the people had reached its height; the time of vengeance was at hand. At the command of divine Providence, the combustible materials of the vale of Siddim were kindled, the fire spread rapidly from part to part, from city to city, and the remnants of the conflagration sunk in upon the water which extended below, till, instead of the plain and the beautiful dwellings of its inhabitants, nothing met the eye but a wide and desolate lake. The inhabitants themselves, rich and poor, young and old alike, with the exception of a single pious family, lay buried in one great tomb, nameless, forgotten.† The nature of the soil and of the waters bear witness to the truth of the scriptural account. Both are strongly impregnated with salts of different

* 2 Sam. viii. 13; 1 Chron. xviii. 12; Psalm lx. title.

† Gen. xix.

kinds, and abound in inflammable minerals. When, in the spring, the lake is swollen by the periodical rise of the river, its superfluous waters are received into pits on the margin, where they leave a deposit of salt. The same substance is found to cover every thing which has been plunged in the lake. The waters are very transparent, and exceed all others in weight. They contain few fish, if any, but the tales formerly believed, of noxious vapours arising from them, and of their fatal effect on birds which might attempt to cross the lake, have been contradicted by recent travellers. The Dead Sea has at present no outlet, but the amount of evaporation from so extensive a surface is sufficient to counterbalance the continual accession of water from the Jordan and its tributary streams.

We leave the barren shores of the Dead Sea to observe some other features of the country. Of these, one of the most remarkable is Mount Lebanon, in the northern part, consisting of two ranges, which the Greeks distinguished by the names Libanus and Antilibanus, though the Hebrew name Lebanon included both. The eastern range, Antilibanus, is the more elevated portion, and in the dark recesses of its summit, the snow rests perpetually. Its highest peak is Hermon.

Of the famous cedars of Lebanon, from which Solomon obtained so much of the materials of his temple, few of great size now remain, — not more than twenty, with numbers of smaller ones around them. The greatest height of Lebanon is supposed to be between nine and ten thousand feet. The valley between the two ranges is styled Cœle-Syria, or Hollow-Syria. That name, however, was sometimes employed in a more extensive or very indefinite manner.

Mount Carmel is a ridge nearly semicircular, and about forty miles in extent, jutting at its northern extremity into the sea south of Ptolemais or Acre. It is distinguished as the scene of Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal, when the unrivalled power of Jehovah was proved by fire from heaven.* The remarkable fertility of the region has suggested its name, Carmel, signifying "the garden of God."

To the north-east of Carmel rises Mount Tabor, in the centre of an extensive plain. It is of an oblong shape, and presents a very regular elevation. On its summit is a plain about a mile in circuit. Here Deborah and Barak assembled their army before the battle with Sisera; † and in

* 1 Kings, xviii. 21 - 41.

† Judges iv. 6, 14.

the war with the Romans, which terminated the existence of the Jewish state, the top of Tabor was fortified by Josephus, who afterwards became the historian of his nation.

The mountains of Israel, or of Ephraim, occupy the centre of the country ; to the south of them are the mountains of Judah. Among those of Israel are the celebrated hills Ebal and Gerizim, from which the law received its last solemn sanction, by the curses on disobedience and the blessings on obedience which were there pronounced.* In the valley between them was the ancient city of Shechem, known in the time of Jesus by the name of Sychar, near which occurred the remarkable conversation between our Saviour and the woman of Samaria.† It now bears the name of Napolose, or Nablous, a corruption of the Greek name Neapolis. The city of Samaria was about eight miles distant. Among the mountains of Judah was the cave of Adullam, distinguished as David's place of refuge from the persecution of Saul.

The ranges of mountains east of Jordan bore in their northern part the name of Bashan, south-

* Deut. xi. 29 - 32 ; Josh. viii. 33 - 35.

† John iv.

wardly that of Abarim, while Gilead designated those in the centre. From Pisgah, the summit of Mount Nebo, one of the Abarim range, the whole of the Holy Land is visible. From this height Moses was favored with a view of the region he was not permitted to enter; and here, unseen by man, he surrendered his spirit to his Maker. No mortal eye witnessed his death, no human being knew the spot where the venerable prophet was laid.*

Beside the Jordan, the principal rivers of Palestine are the Leontes, the Belus, from the sands of which the manufacture of glass is said to have originated, the Kishon, the brook of Reeds, the brook of Eshkol or Sorek, and the brook Besor, emptying into the Mediterranean; while the Jab-bok, the Arnon, the brook Kidron, and some others, enter the Jordan and its lakes. Of these streams, however, none except the Jordan can be regarded as fully entitled to the name of river. They are torrents, filled in winter by the rains which fall among the mountains, but exhibiting in summer nothing but dry ravines. The Jordan shares in part the same character, though its bed is never left entirely dry. The banks, which at

* Deut. xxxiv. 1 - 5.

most seasons confine the course of the river, are generally from sixty to eighty feet apart,—its depth about ten or twelve. These banks are annually overflowed, generally in the month of March; and at this season the water covers a breadth of about three quarters of a mile. At this limit other banks arise, and the intervening space is covered with shrubs and reeds, the haunt, during the dry season, of lions and other beasts of prey. These, when the river overflows, come up to the surrounding country, to the terror of its inhabitants. Hence is derived a striking figure of the prophet Jeremiah. “Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan, against the habitation of the strong.”*

A country so-varied in its surface by mountains and valleys, open on one side to the breezes of the Mediterranean, bounded on the other by an immeasurable desert, must of course present great diversity of climate and productiveness. Very different representations have been given by writers, ancient and modern, with respect to the fertility of the Holy Land. Some have bestowed on it the highest praise; others speak of it with contempt. It would appear that those who have

* Jer. xlix. 19; l. 44.

judged it most harshly, have viewed too hastily the natural disadvantages of the land, without regarding those peculiarities of soil and climate by which they are more than compensated. The land is mountainous ; but on many of its loftiest hills, the soil is sufficiently abundant and fertile to repay the immense labor of forming it into terraces, which rise one above another from the valleys to the summit. The plains are scantily watered, and the few streams are generally dry in summer ; but the rains occur with great regularity, and under the genial climate the fruits of the earth rapidly attain maturity. The face of the country, irregularly broken into hills and valleys, possesses a double advantage. Its hills afford a more extensive surface than would be found in a plain within the same boundaries ; and present, at different heights and exposures, a variety of climate, sustaining consequently the most various productions. The Holy Land has suffered in modern times from the evils of a government equally tyrannical and inefficient. The inhabitants might have some hope of enjoying, in part at least, the natural reward of industry, if their rulers, while oppressing them, defended them from the oppressions of others ; but the Turkish governors, though plundering their subjects at pleasure, have

not possessed the strength or the intelligence requisite to repress the incursions of the marauding Arabs. Under such a state of things, labor has no encouragement, industry no reward. A reasonable hope may be entertained that a better administration will take place with advantageous results under the government of the pasha of Egypt, to whom Palestine has recently been transferred.

In the western portion of Judea Proper, the land rises from the sea in successive plains covered with the richest vegetation. But when the verdant summits have been passed, and the land is no longer refreshed by the Mediterranean breezes, but open to the scorching blasts of the desert, vegetation gradually decreases, till it terminates on the barren shores of the Dead Sea. Here was the wilderness of Judea, in which our Saviour spent forty days in meditation before entering upon the public discharge of his high office. A barren and mountainous country extends from this wilderness between Jerusalem and Jericho. Hither, probably, Jesus ascended, and obtained from one of the loftier summits that view of the various tetrarchies of Palestine, the "kingdoms of the world," which suggested, but suggested in vain, the allurements of ambition, to

tempt him from his course of suffering and of duty. Honey is the only production which this desert region affords in abundance, and it formed with the locust, which is familiarly eaten in that part of the world, the food of John the Baptist during his preaching in the wilderness and its vicinity.

Advancing northward, we penetrate the mountainous range extending through the centre of the country, and find the native ruggedness of its character subdued by the industry of centuries. "The limestone rocks and stony valleys," says Dr. Clarke, "were entirely covered with plantations of figs, vines, and olive trees; not a single spot seemed to be neglected. The hills, from their bases to their utmost summits, were entirely covered with gardens; all of these were free from weeds, and in the highest state of agricultural perfection. Even the sides of the most barren mountains had been rendered fertile, by being divided into terraces, like steps, rising one above another, whereon soil had been accumulated with astonishing labor. Among the standing crops, we noticed millet, cotton, linseed, and tobacco, and occasionally small fields of barley. A sight of this territory can alone convey an adequate idea of its surprising produce; it is truly the garden of

the east, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvest; the salubrity of its air; its limpid springs; its rivers, lakes, and matchless plains; its hills and vales; all, added to the serenity of the climate, prove this land to be indeed 'a field which the Lord hath blest: God hath given it of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.'"

From the mountains of Israel we emerge upon the spacious plain of Jezreel, or Esdraelon, (extending across the country from Carmel and the Mediterranean on the west, to the Jordan on the east,) the most fertile part of the Holy Land, and forming anciently the canton of Issachar, with part of that occupied by the half tribe of Manasseh. The heights and valleys of Carmel, "the garden of God," lay to the north-west; and southward thence along the coast as far as Joppa was the district known in ancient times as Sharon, a region proverbial for the richness of its soil. It appears from a passage in the first book of Chronicles (v. 16), that there was another Sharon, in the tribe of Gad.

In Galilee, which we now enter, the same fer-

tility prevailed. Around the southern portion, the beautiful lake of Gennesareth and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, extended a plain of great richness. The country gradually rose towards the north, presenting successive elevations covered with verdure, and affording the most agreeable variety of climate and productions, till at length the noble chain of Lebanon terminates the prospect, exhibiting at intervals the most magnificent scenery in all the wildness of nature, contrasted with the triumph of art and patience over that wildness, in the cultivated terraces that cover the apparently inaccessible rocks. Such is here the variety of climate between the summit and the lower parts of the mountains, that Volney justifies the poetical expression of the Arabs, that the Saunin, the ancient Hermon, bears winter on his head, spring on his shoulders, and autumn in his bosom, while summer lies sleeping at his feet. Moore has beautifully appropriated the idea.

“Sainted Lebanon,
Whose head in wintry grandeur towers
And whitens with eternal sleet,
While summer, in a vale of flowers,
Is sleeping rosy at his feet.” — *Lalla Rookh*.

These mountains now form the habitation of the

Maronites and Druses, who preserve an unambitious independence in their inaccessible homes. The Maronites are Roman Catholic Christians. The religion of the Druses is peculiar, combining with the belief of one God, the practice of some ancient Syrian superstitions, and a reverence for Hakem, caliph of Egypt, who lived in the eleventh century, and whom they regard as an incarnation of the Deity. Safe from oppression, these tribes enjoy the encouragements to industry which such safety affords, and on their mountain terraces, as on those among the hills of Judea, the high state of cultivation exhibits the results which might be attained, were the whole country blessed with a mild and efficient government. The central plain of Esdraelon on the other hand, in ancient times the garden of Israel, at present exposed to incursions from every quarter, is no longer a safe residence for the industry which it might have so well rewarded. It is left in solitude to waste its exuberant richness in pasturage for a few Arab hordes. The plain extending northward from Mount Carmel along the Mediterranean shore shares the same general character. When visited by Maundrell, it was covered with rank weeds, three or four feet in height. Such

is the desolation, resulting from despotic and unenlightened governments.

Thus far we have described chiefly that portion of the country, extending between the Mediterranean and the Jordan. East of that river lay the territories of Reuben, Gad, and the half of Manasseh; a region increasing in fertility from the barren and mountainous portion near the Dead Sea, to the fertile hills and valleys of Gilead and Bashan, and the rich plains of the district now called Haouran, anciently Auranitis. The latter bears the same character with the region round Damascus, a region which, as the Arabs relate, Mahomet refused to enter "because there was but one paradise for man, and he would not have his in this world." The region beyond Jordan generally is adapted for pasturage, and was on that account selected by the tribes who requested and obtained permission to occupy it as their portion of the promised land.

In its southern part, the country east of Jordan is still inhabited as in ancient times by thousands who make their dwellings in caves, which in this district are numerous and extensive. The same is found to be the case in many parts of Arabia Petræa, east and south of Palestine. At Wady Mousa, about half way between lake Asphaltites

and the Red Sea, are numerous and magnificent remains of ancient architecture, cut out of the solid rock. These are supposed to be the ruins of Petra, the capital of that country during the later ages of the Jewish state.

The succession of the seasons in Palestine corresponds in general features to that in European countries and in the United States. The civil year of the Jews commenced with the month of Tisri, nearly corresponding to September. At this time the heat is frequently greater during the day than in the preceding month, but the nights are cold. Some rain generally descends; dates, pomegranates, and other fruits are collected; cotton is gathered, and the ploughing commenced for the ensuing season. In the following month of October, there are dews at night, and occasionally frost. During November, the wind generally blows from the north, and the *early rain*, if it has not already commenced, now certainly falls. The nights are cold, the trees put off their leaves, and the month of December ushers in the winter. The winds now vary between east and north; but, notwithstanding the generally increasing coldness, in bright calm days it is hot, the sowing of grain continues, and grass and herbs spring up after the rain. In January there is

generally a fall of snow, which, except on the mountains, is dissolved in a few hours; there, however, the snows often lie for months to the depth of several feet. Towards the end of January, the trees, in warmer situations, resume their leaves. In February, the warmth increases, though varied by rains and sometimes by snows. In this month the peach and apple trees blossom, and barley is sown. March introduces everywhere an agreeable warmth, and in the plains the heat is sometimes oppressive. The rivers are now swollen by the melting of the snows; the trees are generally in full leaf, and the first tender grasses appear. In April, frosts entirely cease, and on elevated situations, the full beauty of spring is perceived; around Jericho, and in the plains generally, the heat is great, and the streams begin to dry up. But during March and April, come the *latter rains*, followed by heavy dews; the harvest is thus matured, and during the succeeding month is gathered in. May brings on excessive heat, but rain has sometimes been known to fall. Cotton is now sown, and the first ripening fruits are gathered. June is refreshed by no dews, but western winds from the Mediterranean cool the region beneath their influence. Rice, figs, melons, cherries, and other fruits, with the balm of

Gilead, are the productions of this month. Other refreshing fruits mitigate the heats of July, when the western breezes begin to fail. In this month Lebanon is free from snows, except in its shaded caverns. August closes the year with the gradual diminution of summer heat; the dews and sometimes rain again falling, with occasional high winds. Olives and pomegranates, with the first clusters of the vine are now ripe, the later grapes becoming mature during autumn. The second figs are gathered, and the fig-trees begin to bear for the third time in the year.

The Arabians still retain the ancient distribution of the year into six seasons, "seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter." * The *seed-time* extends from the middle of October to the middle of December; *winter* to the middle of February; *cold* from that point to the middle of April; *harvest* to the middle of June; *summer* to the middle of August, and *heat* to the middle of October.

The Land of Promise was not free from occasional afflictions, seldom if ever known to the inhabitants of regions in other respects less favored. Reference is occasionally made in the Scriptures

* Gen. viii. 22.

to earthquakes, which occasionally laid waste flourishing portions of the country. Pestilence sometimes prevailed, and the failure of either the early or the latter rain occasioned famine. The leprosy, of which we shall have occasion subsequently to speak, was an evil which even the wise provisions of the Mosaic law never effectually banished from the land. The east wind, like the Sirocco of Italy, produced general lassitude, but does not appear to have been otherwise injurious to health. The wind called Simoom or Samiel has often been described in strong terms by travellers as most destructive in its effects. It was generally believed that those overtaken by it in a standing position, died at once, and that the cohesion of their bodies was immediately destroyed, so that a touch would dismember them. The researches of later travellers, however, have proved that these accounts are greatly exaggerated. In the same class of exaggerations must be ranked the tales of whole caravans being buried in the sands by the violence of the Samiel. The wind in question is nothing more than a violent current, heated by passing over the burning sands of the desert, and bearing those sands with it in sufficient quantities to annoy men and animals, unless they cast themselves to the ground, or otherwise

shelter their faces. In some instances, travellers already exhausted by excessive fatigue and heat, may have fallen victims to a sudden burning wind, loaded with suffocating dust; and the rapid decomposition of an emaciated corpse is an effect common to all hot climates.

But among the natural evils to which the Holy Land is subject, the most dreadful is found in the devastation of locusts, which descend on the fields in armies extending for miles, intercepting, when they rise, the beams of the sun, and producing temporary night; devouring every green thing, stripping off the bark of trees, and leaving the unhappy land as if it had been burnt with fire.* But worse than even these terrible destroyers, have been the locusts of the human race, to whose devastating presence this beautiful but unhappy country has been repeatedly subjected. Not only have Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Romans, Saracens, and Turks, made Palestine the scene of their wars, the prey of their rapacity, but Christians, assembled in the name of Christ, bearing for their standard his holy cross, and proclaiming for their object the rescue of his holy sepulchre, have descended, like locusts, on the

* See the prophecy of Joel, chapters i. and ii.

land of their Saviour's birth, and filled with war and persecution and blood, the peculiar territory of the Prince of Peace. Melancholy is the lesson of human ignorance and human passion exhibited in the history of the crusades ; and yet, when we remember that with the excitement of that period commenced the renewed vigor of the human mind, — that thence sprung the wild but beautiful visions of chivalry, — that there the spirit of lofty devotion was rekindled, and the first dawn-ing perceived of that mental and religious light, which has since burst in so much radiance upon Europe and the world, — we see reason to admire the ways of Providence, and bless the wisdom and the goodness of Him who bringeth good out of evil.

From our view of the Holy Land at large, we turn to the survey of its capital, the city of Jerusalem. How many changes has that spot experienced ! The causes which communicated to it a peculiar sanctity for three thousand years, are known to all ; but it appears to have been regarded with religious veneration long before it became consecrated by the sanctuary of the God of Israel. Like the Caaba, or Holy House of Mecca, it possessed a sanctity in public opinion, the origin of which is too remote for historical research to

trace. Here it was that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedek, King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High God.* Hither, to the mountain Moriah, where afterwards the temple was built, the same patriarch, by divine command, brought his son Isaac, to present him as a burnt-offering.† From Salem, the name of the place was changed to Jebus, and its inhabitants are known in the history of the early Hebrew commanders, as the Jebusites. Its strongest portion, Zion, was never reduced till the time of David, who, having taken it, fixed there his royal residence, and called the hill of Zion "the city of David."‡ Ornan or Araunah the Jebusite still occupied, on good terms with the conqueror, the hill of Moriah, until it was purchased of him by David for the express purpose of performing there sacred rites. It would appear that its ancient sanctity of character still existed, and that Araunah, who is styled in the original Scriptures, a king, exercised there a species of sacred authority, or was at least the representative, by lineal descent, of the patriarchal priests and kings of Jebus.§

The city, which had been enlarged and embellished by David, was further adorned with sump-

* Gen. xiv. 18, 20. † Gen. xxii. ‡ 2 Sam. v. 6-9.
§ 2 Sam. xxiv. 18-25; 1 Chron. xxi, 18-30; xxii, 1.

tuous buildings by his magnificent and wealthy successor. It remained the seat of government for the kingdom of Judah through all the changes that ensued, till the disastrous period which terminated in the Babylonish captivity. It was taken by the Assyrians in the days of Manasseh; and by Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, after that unhappy battle in which the good Josiah lost his life. Eleven years after, it was taken by Nebuchadnezzar; and again, after a similar interval, totally destroyed, and its king and people carried away captive by the same Babylonian monarch. Rebuilt by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, it remained faithful to the Persian kings, till entered without resistance by Alexander the Great. It shared the changing fortunes of Syria and Egypt, under the successors of that conqueror; was laid waste, and its worship polluted, by Antiochus Epiphanes; purified and strengthened by Judas Maccabeus and his valiant brethren; torn with civil tumults by some of their descendants, and wrested from them by the Romans to become the capital of their crafty vassal Herod. It witnessed the domestic tragedies and public splendor of his tyrannical but successful reign; passed from the misrule of his son Archelaüs to the government of Roman procurators; and saw, under

their rule, the execution of Him who came as the Son of David, and the Son of God. Successive oppressions provoked a war which will, we may trust, ever remain unparalleled in the history of carnage. That war terminated in the ruin of temple, city, and nation.

Since then, it has been successively a colony of heathen Romans, worshipping Venus on the hill of Calvary; a city of christian Romans, adorned with splendid churches erected by imperial devotion or policy; the capital of a Saracen conquest; the seat of a feudal kingdom, with a line of French princes on its throne; and finally the impoverished centre of an impoverished Turkish province; but still held sacred, alike by Jew, Mahometan, and Christian, still fondly resorted to by men of every creed. The Turks, who possess it, share in the veneration prompted by the remarkable events which have here transpired. Its name with them is El Kods, "the Holy," and in the valley of Kidron they expect the human race to assemble at the day of judgment. Christians of every language and every sect, from the neighbouring Asiatic provinces, from Europe, and even from America, gaze with indescribable feelings on those scenes which recall to memory the events

of their Saviour's sufferings and triumph. The Armenian, the Greek, and the Roman Catholic kneel with implicit faith before memorials, which, as they fancy, mark the very spot where rested the cross of Jesus; and believe that they can still trace the cleft of the rock, rent when the earth quaked at the time of his crucifixion. The Protestant, though he cannot place the same confidence in such traditions, and conceives the interest attached to sacred ground rather obscured than increased by the costly embellishments which have been accumulated there in modern times, yet traces with pleasure the scenes which still bear some resemblance to what they were in the Saviour's days. The temple where he so often taught is no more; but the lofty hill on which it stood can never lose its deep interest; and though Calvary be concealed beneath masses of ill-judged architecture, the scanty brook of Kidron still flows where it did, and the Mount of Olives still overlooks Jerusalem, as at the time when Jesus retired thither to pour forth his prayer of agony, yet of submission. But even more deeply, sadly, interesting is this Holy City to the descendants of those who, for more than a thousand years, went up thither on the annual feasts "with the voice

of joy and praise, with the multitude of them that keep holy day." * Now, the sacred mountain where their fathers worshipped is desecrated in their sight by the mosque of the Arabian impostor. The city of David is the stronghold of those who despise the ancient people whom David ruled. Near eighteen hundred years have passed since the Hebrew captives in the power of Titus turned back on the burning temple their last agonizing glance, and never from that day has the Holy Land been restored to the sway of its own peculiar race. Heathen, Christian, and Mahometan have ruled it in turn, and each in turn has scorned and oppressed those who once were the free and happy owners of the land. Yet, scorned and oppressed, the Hebrew lingers round Jerusalem, his hope still anticipating the advent of a Messiah before whose wrath the Nazarene and the Islamite shall be scattered in a moment; ignorant, alas! that the Messiah has already come, with weapons not of human warfare, but of peace and love and suffering, to establish, not the earthly throne of David, but the kingdom of righteousness and joy in the hearts of men.

Jerusalem is situated in that mountainous country, which extends through the centre of Pales-

* Psalm xlii. 4.

tine from north to south. Surrounded on every side except the north, with lofty hills, the city was itself erected on three precipitous elevations. Of these the southernmost and loftiest was the hill of Zion, the city of David. To the north of Zion was the hill of Acra, on which the lower city was built. Moriah, which was crowned by the temple, lay eastwardly from Acra, and was originally divided from it by a valley which was filled up by the Asmonean princes. A valley, called that of the cheesemongers, still existed, separating Zion from the other hills. Near its termination was the ~~fountain~~ of Siloam, on which the inhabitants chiefly relied for their supply of pure water, especially in time of siege. To the north of Moriah and Acra existed a quarter of more modern origin than the rest, under the name of Bezetha, or the New City. The whole was surrounded, in the time of the siege by Titus, with walls of great strength, furnished with numerous towers, besides which Zion, Acra, and the temple were each separately and strongly fortified. Over the whole arose lofty and magnificent towers, four of them erected by Herod, and called after his patron, Antony, his friend Hippicus, his brother Phasaël, and his wife Mariamne. They rose above the city to heights of from sixty to a hundred and

forty feet, and were fitted up internally with regal splendor. Noble indeed must have been the appearance of this rock-built city. Toward the south frowned abruptly the impregnable fortress of Zion; elsewhere the whole ascent of Moriah crowned with the successive courts of the temple, and the lofty sanctuary itself, shone to the rising sun "a mountain of snow studded with jewels,"* and through the intervening space palaces and towers lifted their proud summits above the numerous dwellings of the inhabitants, till their height exceeded that of the surrounding hills, and the prospect from them embraced at once the Mediterranean Sea, and the Arabian desert.

"The earliest ray of the golden day
On that hallowed spot was cast,
And the evening sun, as he left the world,
Looked kindly on that spot last."

East of Jerusalem lay the valley of Jehosaphat, through which flowed the brook Kidron; and beyond rose the Mount of Olives, the spot once desecrated by Solomon through the erection of idol temples, and known consequently, as the Mount of Corruption,† but now invested with an

* Croly's Salathiel, chap. iii.

† 2 Kings, xxiii. 13.

interest with which scarcely Moriah can compare. Here Jesus, as he approached the city, which expanded in its beauty before him, paused to weep over its approaching desolation. Hither he often resorted to spend the calm evening hours in prayer with his disciples ; and hence he ascended, from the midst of his disciples, to the holy presence of the Eternal Father.

South from the city, under the brow of Zion, extends the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, or Tophet. This place was selected in the darkest days of the ancient Hebrew kingdom, by the worshippers of Moloch, for the performance of their idolatrous rites. Here it was that children were made to pass through the fire, while their cries of pain were unheard amid the noise of drums. To prevent it from being again devoted to such purposes, Josiah polluted it, by burning there the bones of dead men.* Following his example, the Jews, from his time, carried thither the offal of the city to be destroyed by fire ; here, too, the dead bodies of some malefactors were consumed ; and from the character which it thus attained, the fire of Gehenna became a national expression to denote the punishment of another world.

* 2 Kings, xxiii. 10.

The valley and mountain of Gihon approached the city on its western side. Nearer to the wall was a gentle elevation, which had received the name of Golgotha or Calvary, that is, "a skull," from being generally used as the scene of public executions. Here it was that the Saviour of mankind was crucified with two malefactors; and in a tomb excavated from the rock in the immediate neighbourhood, his body was deposited, till, by the power of God, he was recalled to life. The hill of Calvary was then without the wall; at present, so great has been the change, the magnificent christian church which marks its site, is nearly in the centre of the city; for the walls at present exclude the greater part of Zion, and embrace a large portion towards the west. Doubts have been suggested by many travellers whether the true position of Calvary be that which tradition assigns; and no intelligent visitant gives credit to the minute accuracy of the localities which the priests assign to each event of the Saviour's death and burial. But with regard to the situation of Calvary itself, the testimony which assigns it to the place described is too unbroken to be set aside; and if the character of the ground has been altered, it should be remembered that extensive changes are expressly recorded to have

been made, when the emperor Adrian built on the spot a temple to Venus.

On its northern quarter the city was more accessible than in other directions, and to that point it was, that the Roman army under Titus chiefly directed their efforts.

The present situation of Jerusalem may be collected from what has already been stated. Excluding the greater part of Zion, it embraces Acra, Moriah, and Bezetha, with a new quarter extending to the north and west. The mosque of Omar occupies the space formerly covered by the temple. The Christians chiefly occupy the new portion, near the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Jewish quarter is south of them, embracing a of part Acra, while the Mahometans occupy the whole eastern portion. Jerusalem is at present a heavily built city, exhibiting its most interesting view as approached from Nablous, the ancient Shechem, but affording, in the lowness of its buildings, and the small number of ornamental objects, a remarkable contrast to its appearance in ancient times, when adorned with those lofty towers which appear to have constituted the distinguishing beauty of the Jewish architectural style.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF PALESTINE TO THE REVOLT OF THE
TEN TRIBES.

"When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
 Out from the land of bondage came,
 Her Father's God before her moved,
 An awful guide in smoke and flame.
 By day, along the astonished lands,
 The cloudy pillar glided slow,
 By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
 Returned the fiery column's glow."

Sir Walter Scott.

ABOUT nineteen centuries before the birth of Christ, there came into the land of Palestine a stranger from the north-east, the country of the Chaldeans. He had been called thence by his God, that from him might descend a nation, who should keep alive, through ages of darkness, the knowledge of the divine character and will, until other nations should be prepared to receive, through them, the fulness of heavenly truth.

Abram, for such was the name of the Chaldean patriarch, found the country occupied in part by wandering tribes; a few cities there were, however, occupied by the Canaanites. The presence of these few inhabitants did not prevent the entrance and permanent settlement of Abram, or, as he was now called, Abraham, "the Father of many nations." He built altars and dug wells; he became, to use the expression of one of his contemporaries, "a mighty prince among them;" so that on occasion of a war in which nine petty kings of the country were engaged, the conquerors were pursued and defeated by Abraham, at the head of a little army, consisting principally of two hundred of his own domestic servants. He lived, however, generally at peace with the surrounding tribes, as a shepherd king, residing in his tent, and welcoming his guests sometimes there, sometimes beneath the shade of a spreading tree, while around him extended far and wide the domain which he claimed by the right of first occupancy, and over which roamed his flocks and herds, under the care of his numerous servants. His eldest son, Ishmael, became a hunter, and the ancestor of the Arabian tribes. To his second, Isaac, descended that peculiar blessing, which comprised the promise of future greatness and high privi-

leges to his descendants, and which he subsequently bestowed on his son Jacob.

Years passed on ; generation after generation rose and died. By the pious love of his son Joseph, Jacob and his family had exchanged their residence for the fertile pasture-grounds of lower Egypt ; but this was done without relinquishing their claim to the territory they had so long occupied, where yet remained the altars they had erected to their God, the wells they had dug, the landmarks they had placed, the sepulchre of Abraham and Isaac, the various marks of occupation which asserted their undisputed right. At length that right was again asserted. Brought forth from Egypt by the powerful hand and outstretched arm of the Almighty, they remained encamped in different parts of the Arabian desert, till prepared by a course of miraculous discipline, to sustain the high character of God's chosen people, the future instructors of the world.

It is by no means easy, in a brief space, to give a distinct account of an expedition so full of wonderful incidents, as that of the Israelites from Egypt to the Land of Promise. Its prominent events, however, are too important to be passed without notice. On leaving Egypt, their leader, by divine instruction, conducted them to a posi-

tion, apparently of great danger. They saw mountains around them, and a narrow arm of the Red Sea in front, while the Egyptians were pursuing them in the rear. The Almighty operated miraculously, though by the intervention of natural causes, for their deliverance. The gulf in that vicinity has been known in later times, occasionally to leave bare a portion of its bed. Under the combined influence of a strong east wind and a receding tide, this effect was produced at the precise moment when it was necessary for the security of the Israelites. Their host passed the sea in safety. The Egyptians, pursuing them, were overwhelmed in the returning waves. The rescued Israelites passed on to Mount Sinai. There, amid thunders and lightnings, a miraculous voice delivered to them the ten commandments; and Moses, retiring to the mountain, spent one month, preparing in its solitudes, and in the presence alone of that Being whose glory was so brightly manifested, the laws which were to govern the people over whom he ruled. In his absence, his nation showed that they were not yet prepared for a purely spiritual worship. At their entreaty, Aaron formed for them in gold, the image of a calf, — an animal sacred among the Egyptians, from whom they had recently come forth; and

this they worshipped as an emblem of the God of their fathers. Their idolatry, for such it was, was arrested in its course, and severely punished; and to meet the demand which had suggested it, for external objects of religious veneration, a splendid tent or tabernacle was erected, the model of their temple in later days, and at which alone it was lawful that sacrifices should be performed.

They advanced to the southern border of the Promised Land. Disheartened by the report of the timid spies, whom they had sent forward to ascertain the condition of the country, they murmured against their leader, and gave convincing proof how little they possessed the necessary courage for achieving so great a conquest. Their inspired leader withdrew them from the unequal struggle; and for thirty-eight years they led the life of wanderers in the desert, — an immense body of men, combining in a singular manner the pastoral and the military character. Their chief sustenance was manna, a natural production of the desert, but furnished to them by God in extraordinary abundance, and with restrictions suited to accustom them to the strict observance of the sabbath. On that day only, no manna was to be found.

We pass over the details of the rebellions against

Moses, which arose probably from dissatisfaction at the prolonged continuance of their encampment in the desert, and in quelling which the Almighty supernaturally vindicated the authority of his lawgiver. At length, they approached the Promised Land again, on its western border. Canaan, between the Jordan and the sea, they claimed as the property of their ancestors, and as the gift of God. Of the neighbouring nations, they desired only a free passage. This had been refused them by the Edomites, a kindred race descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob; and the Israelites, mindful of their common origin, had turned aside and passed by a long circuit to the south and east of Edom. With the Amorites and the people of Bashan, they were less scrupulous. Sihon and Og, the chiefs of those powerful tribes, not only refused a passage through their territories, but came out in arms to meet them. The Israelites subdued and slew them, and appropriated their country. The treachery of the Moabites, who had endeavoured to alienate them from their God and their leader, was signally punished. And, at length, Moses having brought his army to the borders of the Promised Land, surrendered his spirit to the God with whom it had so long enjoyed the lofty intercourse of inspiration.

It is no part of our undertaking to trace the progress of the conquering Israelites, till they found themselves established in the land of Abraham and Isaac. Many were their victories, many the proofs afforded them of divine assistance, as they passed from city to city, under the command of Joshua, the successor of Moses. In one battle, so great was the slaughter and so long continued, that by a most bold and splendid figure, the sun and moon themselves are said to have paused in their courses at the command of Joshua. It is a pleasing thought to those who are disposed to shudder at the terrible vengeance of God on the guilty Canaanites, that the severity of the Hebrews, by shortening the contest, and obliging the people of the land to seek safety in flight, may have diminished the horrors of the war. Tradition informs us, with great probability, that many settlements on the coast of Africa were formed by the Canaanites who had been expelled from Palestine; and Procopius of Gaza, who flourished in the sixth century, asserts the existence of a monument in the ancient city of Tingis, now Tangier, on which the fact of their exile, and even the name of their conqueror, Joshua, is recorded.

The land was now divided among the tribes of Israel. According to the ancient law of primo-

geniture, Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, would have been entitled to a double share in the inheritance of his father. But the claim of Reuben had been forfeited by his misconduct, and the privileges of the first-born were conferred on Joseph, who had with such noble and all-forgiving affection, sustained the whole race of Jacob in the time of their greatest need.* On him the double portion, the right of the first-born was bestowed; each of his two sons ranked on an equality with the sons of Jacob himself; each of them became the head of a distinct tribe. Providence sanctioned the change, by increasing the numbers of Ephraim and Manasseh, so that the separate portion of the land which each of them received, was due, not only to their father Joseph's merit, but to their comparative numerical importance in the camp of Israel. The tribe of Manasseh, moreover, was divided; a portion of its members, at their own request, receiving their allotment on the east of Jordan, while the rest accompanied Joshua to its western bank.

By the admission of Ephraim and Manasseh to the rank of tribes, the number of the whole was increased to thirteen; but to the tribe of Levi,

* Compare Gen. xlviii. 5, 22; 1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

which, being devoted to the service of religion, received its support from the tithes and first fruits, no separate territory was assigned. They were distributed in cities throughout the territories of the other tribes, and thus the number of the confederated Hebrew cantons was reduced again to twelve. Of these, the descendants of Gad and Reuben, with half the tribe of Manasseh, occupied the conquered territories of Sihon and Og, east of the Jordan and its lakes. Westward of that boundary, Asher and Naphtali filled the high country towards Lebanon; Zebulun extended south of them, from the Mediterranean to the lake Gennesareth; Issachar occupied the fertile plain of Jezreel. South of this tribe was the remaining half of Manasseh, nearly in the centre of the Holy Land. Ephraim came next, then Benjamin, and Judah, along the shores of the Dead Sea, while Dan and Simeon occupied the corresponding coast of the Mediterranean.

Remnants, however, of the aboriginal nations still remained in the land of which the Hebrews had now acquired possession. In neighbouring nations also, the Israelites found formidable enemies, and in some instances conquerors. Not many years had elapsed from the death of Joshua, before they were reduced to subjection by Chu-

san-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia. After a servitude to him of eight years, they were victorious under the command of Othniel, the nephew and son-in-law of Caleb. It is needless to enter into the detail of their successive defeats and victories. Their Almighty Sovereign, the only King whom they now acknowledged, prevented the destruction, or permanent oppression of his people; but he relieved them in such a manner as to render them continually sensible of their dependence on him. He did not give success to their arms in the day of their pride; but when, having been subjected to a foreign yoke, affliction had brought with it repentance and amendment, then he raised up for them heroes, who led their hosts in his name, and ascribed to him the glory of their victories. A chief who had been thus successful in war, retained in peace, under the title of *Judge*, an authority founded on his personal character and popularity, and on the divine favor exhibited in the success of his arms. Under the paternal sway of such men, the nation enjoyed many intervals of repose and freedom. But when a Judge died, his office, not being founded on any written constitution, became extinct; disorders consequently increased; the people turned aside from the law of their God, and needed fresh discipline

to bring them back to his service. At the same time, the state, unprovided with an executive officer, presented a more easy prey to surrounding tribes. Invaded and subdued, they turned again to their heavenly Ruler, and again he raised up for them a hero and a judge. Thus, for about four hundred and fifty years from the death of Joshua, did the Hebrew state exist, bearing generally the features of a republican government, but occasionally verging towards monarchy. In a single instance, the popular affection for a heaven-appointed leader, Gideon, was continued to one of his sons, and one, unhappily, by no means the worthiest. Abimelech was made king by the inhabitants of Shechem, and commenced his reign with the murder of his brothers. But his kingdom was of short duration. He was slain, and the state returned to its republican form.

But that form did not long continue to please a people, who, notwithstanding all their advantages, had not yet acquired correct ideas of greatness; and, at their unanimous wish, and the consequent command of God, Saul was placed on the newly erected throne. It affords a remarkable instance of the simple manners of that age, that after the consecration of the king, the first

case in which he exercised royal authority was on an invasion, of which he received the tidings as he was returning with the herd from the field.

From him we pass to his successor, David ; nor in the most beautiful visions of romance do we find anything more eventful, more poetical, than his history. We see him, now the youthful shepherd of Bethlehem, contemplating in the solitude which his occupation affords, those beauties of nature and those glories of nature's God, which formed the subject of his most splendid poetical effusions. We see him again, the hero and the deliverer, greeted with songs and dances on his return from the conquest which God had wrought by his hand. We follow him through his brilliant success, his ardent friendship with the noble-minded Jonathan, his marriage with the daughter of the king, the sufferings to which the persecutions of Saul exposed him, the generosity with which he spared the life of his enemy when in his power ; till at length, on the death of Saul and Jonathan in battle, we hear him lamenting the untimely fall of his princely friend, and magnanimously joining with his name that of his father, the king and the persecutor. "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places : how are the mighty fallen ! Saul and Jonathan were lovely

and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!"* The wandering exile now fills the throne, and his long and illustrious reign establishes firmly and spreads over neighbouring nations the power of the Hebrew sceptre. Everywhere his harp was his companion. It rung in wild melody amid the mountain scenery of his early wanderings, and poured the tide of solemn praise when he sat, in the dignity of the prophet and the king, in the palace of his nation ; and, when driven thence for a season by the arms of his ambitious son, it breathed a plaintive strain, mingling with his sorrow his longing aspirations for the house of his God.

The course of history passes onward to the peaceful and magnificent reign of his wise successor ; and when we read in the sacred volume the authentic accounts of his wealth, his power, and his fame, we scarcely wonder at the exaggerations of eastern fable, which ascribe to him power over the spirits of air and earth, and assert that not only neighbouring tribes, but the invisible powers of nature, bowed to the magic sceptre of Solomon.

* 2 Sam. i. 19, 23, 25.

On these well known, though deeply interesting portions of history, our limits suffer us not to linger. That age of glory soon passed away. The kingdom which had been enlarged in Solomon's most prosperous days, till it extended from the Red Sea to the Euphrates, had already sustained some losses before the close of his reign. His sumptuous court had become, notwithstanding his immense resources from commerce, burdensome to the community; and the powerful house of Joseph, comprising the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, had long endured with ill-suppressed jealousy, the ascendancy of the tribe of Judah. The first act of the arrogant and foolish Rehoboam gave occasion for a revolt. Excepting Benjamin, which, from its small extent always sided with its more powerful neighbour, Judah alone supported the authority of the house of David. From this time, therefore, the country was divided into two kingdoms; — that of *Judah*, comprizing the two tribes just named, and that of *Israel*, formed by the other ten.

CHAPTER III.

HISTORY FROM THE DIVISION TO THE CAPTIVITY.

“ The consummating hour is come !
 Alas for Solyma !
 How is she desolate, —
 She that was great among the nations, fallen !

And thou, thou miserable king,
 Where is thy trusted flock,
 Thy flock so beautiful,
 Thy fathers' throne, the temple of thy God ? ”

Southey.

THE history of the ten tribes, or the kingdom of Israel, is a history of usurpations, massacre, and idolatry. By divine command, sacrifices were to be offered only where the ark of God was ; and that sacred ark, which had previously been deposited in the sumptuous but movable tabernacle, now consecrated by its presence the magnificent temple lately built by Solomon in Jerusalem. Lest, therefore, his subjects should have occasion to visit continually the capital of the rival king-

dom, Jeroboam, the first monarch of the revolted tribes, imitated the sin to which Aaron and the people had been tempted at the foot of Sinai, — that species of idolatry which consists in worshipping the Creator by the use of emblems, a worship forbidden by God, and of corrupting tendency. For this purpose, he erected two images of calves, — emblems of strength, — at Bethel and Dan. In the records of his kingdom, when allusion is made to this sovereign, he is distinguished by this, his chief and pernicious crime, as “Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.”

But the power, thus confirmed by the criminal policy of Jeroboam, remained not long in his family. His virtuous son Abijah died during the king's life, being mercifully taken by God from the coming evils. Nadab, another son, wore the crown of Israel unworthily two years. He was slain by Baasha, who then ascended the throne. Like Jeroboam, Baasha sinned against the Lord, and, like Jeroboam, transmitted his power to be enjoyed for two years by his son. That son, Elah, was murdered by Zimri at a riotous banquet. The murderer, surrounded by the troops of Elah, perished after a reign of seven days, in the flames of the palace he had usurped. His

conqueror, Omri, after an interval of anarchy, was acknowledged king. In his reign, the city of Samaria, from that time the capital of his kingdom, was built. It received its name from that of the proprietor from whom Omri purchased the ground for its erection. Omri pursued the guilty course of his predecessors, but left the measure of crime to be filled by his son Ahab, of whom it is recorded, that "he did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him."

The kingdom of Judah, meantime, had enjoyed more of peace under the regular succession of the house of David. The characters of Rehoboam and his son Abijam or Abijah, were indeed stained with crimes; but the son of the latter, the pious Asa, governed Judah happily for forty-one years, during all the bloody and criminal reigns of Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri over Israel. Asa was succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat, who imitated the excellencies of his character.

At this period, the true religion, to preserve which the Hebrew nation had been set apart, seemed rapidly declining. The later days of Solomon had been clouded by idolatry; and Asa had been compelled to displace his grandmother Maachah, from the rank of queen, for the same

offence. In the kingdom of Israel, not only had the sinful policy of Jeroboam been successfully pursued by following monarchs, but Ahab, on his marriage with Jezebel daughter of the king of Sidon, had introduced another form of heathenism, the worship of the sun, under the name Baal, or Lord. To this idolatry Jezebel was blindly devoted, and persecuted the worshippers of the living God. The occasion demanded divine interference. A prophet was raised up, endued with powers such as had hitherto been entrusted to none but the great lawgiver of Israel. Elijah appeared announcing to Ahab an approaching famine, -as a punishment for his transgressions. The enemies of the prophet sought after him, but the Lord preserved him from their power, and in the third year he again boldly presented himself before Ahab. At the challenge of the prophet, four hundred and fifty priests of Baal assemble at Mount Carmel, to test, by the evidence of miracles, the truth of the rival systems. Two altars are erected. The priests of Baal call on their pretended deity from morning till evening, to manifest his power by kindling the wood for their sacrifice. They cry aloud, and cut themselves with knives. The object of their adoration meanwhile passes majestically, but unconsciously,

over the immense assembly, from his rising to his rest. Elijah now repairs a broken altar, which, perhaps in the days of the patriarchs, had been erected to the Lord. He disposes on it the wood and the flesh for the burnt-offering, and pouring large quantities of water over the whole, he calls on Jehovah, and invokes a manifestation of his power. "And the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench: And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Our limits permit us not to trace the eventful and sublime scenes of the prophet's later life to the day when he was taken up to heaven, leaving with his follower Elisha a double portion of his spirit. Ahab had not learned righteousness from the wonders he had seen. An act of complicated injustice and falsehood, prompted and in part executed by Jezebel, had placed him in possession of the inheritance of Naboth. Heavy was the punishment denounced against him; yet, on his humble submission, that punishment was delayed, and he was spared the sight of the utter desolation of his house.

About eighty years had now passed since the

separation, and almost continual war had raged between Israel and Judah. But now a better understanding arose between them, unhappily, as it afterwards appeared, for the royal line of David. Another power had recently opposed their arms; — the kingdom of Syria or Damascus, which, having been wrested from the power of Solomon, had since grown into importance. Benhadad, king of Syria, had been three times defeated by the arms of Ahab, and had the last time escaped only by an appeal to the generosity or the vanity of that prince. At length Ahab, with Jehoshaphat king of Judah, recommenced the war with the purpose of rescuing Ramoth-Gilead, which was in the power of the Syrians. The warnings of the prophet Micaiah were disregarded. Ahab, notwithstanding the precaution of disguising his person, was slain in the battle; and, as the dogs licked the blood with which his chariot and armour were stained, the prophecies denounced against his family began to be fulfilled.

Jehoshaphat returned to his own kingdom. He still maintained a friendly intercourse with Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, who reigned but two years, and with his son Jehoram. He experienced remarkable deliverances in the wars in which he was engaged with the Mo-

abites, Ammonites, and other bordering tribes, and after a virtuous reign of twenty-five years, was succeeded by his son Jehoram. This prince was united in marriage to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel; and thus the spirit, the crimes, and the destiny of the tyrants of Israel became unhappily connected with the house of Judah. The reign of Jehoram in Judah lasted eight years. It was criminal and unfortunate. He was succeeded by Ahaziah, his youngest son. Meanwhile Jehoram, the grandson of Ahab, had swayed the sceptre of Israel with the spirit of his family. At length the prediction against that family attained its fulfilment. Jehu, an officer of the king of Israel, having been anointed by a prophet in the name of the Lord, became the instrument of divine justice. Jehoram was slain. His cousin Ahaziah, king of Judah, who was with him, shared his fate. The aged but infamous Jezebel met a violent death, and the idolatry she had introduced was washed from the realm in blood. Here we must distinguish between the wise judgment of the Eternal, and the ambitious cruelty of man. Jehu received a commission to punish the crimes of Ahab and his family; he received no commission to stain his government with indiscriminate massacre of the innocent and the guilty.

One branch alone remained of that powerful family which had thus been swept from the throne of Israel. Athaliah, daughter of Ahab, widow of that Jehoram who had been king of Judah, had seen her son, king Ahaziah, involved in the ruin of her relative, Jehoram of Israel. She seized the occasion to revenge herself on the human race, if she could not on Jehu; she usurped the sovereign power in Judah, and destroyed, with one exception, the whole royal family of David. That exception was Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah. Snatched from the midst of his murdered relatives, he was brought up secretly in the buildings attached to the temple. At the age of seven years he was exhibited in public by the High Priest Jehoiada, surrounded by a numerous guard of armed Levites. Athaliah, taken by surprise, was slain, and the line of David restored to the throne in the person of Joash.

The reign of this prince in its earlier years was distinguished by strict devotion to the law of God and affectionate reverence to the counsels of the venerable Jehoiada; but when the High Priest died, the character of his pupil experienced a change. He turned aside to idolatrous worship, and, taking offence at the boldness of Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, caused him to be stoned to

death in the court of the temple. At the end of that year, the kingdom was invaded by the Syrians, and Joash was compelled to purchase peace. His servants conspired against him, and put him to death after he had reigned over Judah forty years.

In Israel, meantime, the dynasty of Jehu appeared too much disposed to follow the example of their predecessors. That monarch and his son Jehoahaz successively did evil in the sight of the Lord ; and their kingdom suffered from the incursions of the Syrians. Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, ascended the throne of Israel two years before the death of Joash king of Judah. To him the sacred writings give the same character as to those who had gone before him. The only accusation, however, which in this and some other cases is distinctly brought forward, is founded on the continuance of Jeroboam's idolatrous worship at Bethel and Dan. In the reign of this Joash of Israel, the prophet Elisha died, leaving in his last sickness a prediction of future victories over the Syrians. Joash associated with himself in the government his son Jeroboam, the second of that name ; and dying left the throne to the same prince, who held it forty-one years. Under these two monarchs, Israel recovered something of her

former greatness. The prophets Hosea and Amos, who flourished under Jeroboam, attacked the vices of luxury and forgetfulness of God. Jonah, too, probably prophesied in this reign.

The glory of the dynasty of Jehu in Israel ended with Jeroboam II. His son Zachariah held the throne but six months, before he was slain by Shallum. The murderer enjoyed the fruit of his crime but one month, and yielded it with his life to Menahem. Menahem was succeeded by his son Pekahiah; and he, in two years, was murdered and succeeded in his kingdom by Pekah, the son of Remaliah. It appears from a comparison of dates, that intervals of anarchy, sometimes of several years, must have occurred between the death of some of these monarchs and the acknowledgment of their successors. The kingdom was verging towards ruin, and the strength of a new enemy, destined to be its conqueror, was continually increasing. In the reign of Menahem, Pul, the king of Assyria, came against the land. A thousand talents of silver induced him to return. In the reign of Pekah, Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, despoiled all the northern part of Israel of its inhabitants, carrying them away captive. The crown which Pekah had obtained by violence, he lost in the same manner. Hoshea

slew him, and seized a dominion which was soon to pass altogether into the growing empire of the Assyrians. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the kingdom of Israel, having existed two hundred and fifty-four years, was for ever overthrown, and its inhabitants carried into a captivity from which they never returned, "in Halah and in Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." The country they had occupied was filled with a mixed race, brought thither by the conqueror. These adopted in part the customs of the former inhabitants, but were never recognised by the Jews as brethren.

From this period we must go back some years to resume the succession of the house of Judah. Amaziah had succeeded his father Joash. He receives the praise of history for the justice with which, in punishing the murderers of his father, he spared their children, according to the law of Moses. But he fell himself the victim of a conspiracy, and his son Azariah or Uzziah ascended the throne. His reign was one of the longest and most prosperous in the annals of the kingdom of Judah. The people enjoyed security for fifty years under his government; but in his later years a presumptuous interference with the office of the priesthood, was punished on the spot

with leprosy. The king passed his remaining days in seclusion, and his son Jotham governed in his stead.

Jotham filled the throne well and ably for sixteen years, and was succeeded by his son Ahaz in a feeble and wicked reign of equal length. During their reigns the prophets Isaiah and Micah denounced approaching judgments on the nation, but gave bright glimpses of a more glorious day which should in the fulness of time appear. Ahaz, attacked by Pekah and Rezin, kings of Syria, called upon the Assyrians for aid. The sacred historian relates that the king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, and strengthened him not. In his reign commenced a subjection to the Assyrian empire, which, though his son Hezekiah threw it off soon after his accession, he was compelled subsequently to acknowledge, for a time at least.

The good Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz, and devoted his first attention to the restoration of the true and ancient religion, which his father had neglected for the idolatry of the surrounding nations. Immediately on his accession, the priests, by his command, purified the temple, and all the sacred utensils; and proclamation was made not only through Judah, but the kingdom of Israel also,

that the Passover, long disregarded, would be celebrated according to the law. This was six years before the final removal of the ten tribes. The central portion of Israel, which had suffered least in the preceding war, paid little regard to the invitation of the king of Judah, but from Asher, Naphtali, Issachar, and Zebulun, the northern cantons, which had been humbled most severely by the late invasion of Pul, numbers resorted to the solemn feast of the God whose service they had long neglected. In the kingdom of Hezekiah, and as far as his influence extended in Israel, the altars of the false gods were overthrown. But the pious king trembled before the increasing strength of Assyria. After the overthrow of Israel, Sennacherib, successor of the conqueror, threatened Judah. In deep affliction Hezekiah called upon God; the army of the Assyrians fell victims to an epidemic malady, or some analogous source of destruction, described by the sacred writers, as indeed it was, as an angel or messenger of God. Sennacherib returned to his own country, and was murdered by his own sons. The restoration of Hezekiah to health, with the miraculous sign granted to him on the occasion, led to an embassy from the king of Babylon, then a dependency of the Assyrians,

and on this occasion the virtuous monarch was rebuked for the ill-judged ostentation with which he exhibited his treasures to the greedy eyes of the Babylonian ambassadors.

The reign of his son Manasseh, which extended through fifty-five years, was stained with the blackest crimes. He deserted his father's God, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. But when carried captive to Babylon by the Assyrians he repented. By divine favor, he was restored to his kingdom, and the remainder of his life showed that his penitence was real. His son Amon imitated his sins, but not his change of conduct. His reign of two years was closed by assassination. But the conspirators were slain, and Josiah, the son of Amon, placed on his father's throne.

The early piety of Josiah restored the worship which the reigns of his father and grandfather had caused to decline. The temple was purified; the book of the law brought forth to the light and honored; the altars of idols overthrown; and the people of Judah, with the remnant which the Assyrians had left of Israel, led back to the religion of Moses. But this excellent sovereign was slain in battle against Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, having reigned twenty-nine years. Jehoahaz, his

son and successor, after a reign of five months, was displaced by the conqueror Necho, and Eliakim, or Jehoiakim, his brother, substituted in his place. He enjoyed the precarious dignity for eleven years, dependant sometimes on the Egyptians, and sometimes on the Babylonians, till Nebuchadnezzar removed him to Babylon in chains. Thither his son Jehoiachin, Jeconiah, or Coniah, followed him as a captive after a reign of three months; and the Chaldean monarch raised to the unenviable throne Mattaniah, the brother of Jehoiakim, changing his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah took the oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar; but, trusting in assistance from Egypt, he broke this oath and revolted. Nebuchadnezzar immediately marched his army against him, besieged and took Jerusalem, burned it to the ground, and carried the people captive to Babylon. Zedekiah, attempting to escape, was seized, his sons were slain before his eyes, his eyes were put out, and he was conveyed prisoner to Babylon.

Thus ended the kingdom of Judah, having subsisted three hundred and eighty-eight years from the separation of the ten tribes, and having survived by a hundred and thirty-four years, the overthrow of the sister kingdom of Israel.

A portion of the Hebrews, especially of the lower class, were left in Palestine by Nebuchadnezzar, under the government of one of their countrymen, Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. This governor was treacherously murdered by Ishmael, a man of royal blood. The design of Ishmael had been previously made known to his intended victim, but the generous Gedaliah had refused to believe it. Johanan the son of Kareah, who had given him warning, avenged in some degree the friend he had not been able to save, and Ishmael was driven to seek shelter among the Ammonites. The scanty remnant of Judah, under Johanan, disregarding the warning of the prophet Jeremiah, took refuge in Egypt, and the land of their fathers was desolate for seventy years.

During the calamitous reigns of the later princes of the house of David, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, with several of the minor prophets, had warned the people of the ruin which was impending, as the just consequence of their numerous offences. Ezekiel continued to prophecy after the commencement of the captivity; and Daniel, who rose during that period, attained high honors under the successive Babylonian and Median monarchs.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY CONTINUED TO THE DEATH OF QUEEN
ALEXANDRA.

"Awake ! put on thy beautiful array,
Oh long-forsaken Zion ! to the skies
Send up on every wind thy choral melodies !

"And lift thy head ! Behold thy sons returning
Redeemed from exile, ransomed from the chain !
Light hath revisited the house of mourning ;
She that on Judah's mountains wept in vain,
Because her children were not, dwells again
Girt with the lovely ! Through thy streets once more,
City of God ! shall pass the bridal train !
And the bright lamps their festive radiance pour,
And the triumphal hymns the joy of youth restore !

Mrs. Hemans.

THE ancient monarchy of Assyria had given place to that of Babylon. The latter fell before the combined strength of the Medes and Persians. In the first year of Cyrus, a proclamation was issued, commanding that the temple at Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and encouraging the return of the Jews to Palestine. The sacred treasures,

which had been taken thence by Nebuchadnezzar, were restored, and the declarations of many prophets fulfilled by the reëstablishment of the Hebrew commonwealth, at the time which had been expressly designated, and by command of a prince whose conduct and whose very name had been intimated in the predictions of former days.

The Israelites, under the direction of Zerubabel, the descendant of king Jehoiachin, commenced the restoration of their sacred edifice. Their work had not, however, far advanced before it received a check from the invidious attempts of their neighbours in Samaria, or what had formerly been the kingdom of Israel. The present occupants of that country were a mixed race, consisting partly of various colonies which had been transplanted thither by the Assyrians, and partly, it is probable, of the remnant of the ten tribes. They claimed, as Israelites, the right of assisting in the erection of the temple ; but the claim was refused on the ground of their questionable descent. Disappointed, they exerted their influence to stop the progress of the work. In this they were unsuccessful during the reigns of Cyrus and his son Cambyzes,* but they attained

* Called Ahasuerus in Ezra, iv. 6.

their object at length under the usurpation of the Magian who assumed the name of Smerdis.* By him a decree was issued, forbidding the rebuilding of the temple. But when the usurper had been slain, and Darius Hystaspes was seated on the throne, the Jews, encouraged by their prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, and by the mild and just character of the prince, recommenced the work without awaiting permission. An investigation of the records of Cyrus resulting in the discovery of the original decree, induced the Persian monarch to grant his protection and favor to the enterprise. The sacred edifice was rebuilt on a more extended plan than that of the former temple, yet at its foundation, the old men who had witnessed the glory of that ancient house, wept desponding tears. The sacred ark of the covenant was gone; the line of David, though still existing, no more reigned among them on that throne which God himself had established; the fertile hills and valleys of Judah had been desolated, and many years must elapse before the revival of their ancient prosperity could be discerned in the thinly inhabited cities of the Holy Land. But the prophets encouraged their coun-

† Called Artaxerxes in Ezra, iv. 7.

trymen to hope for better times. They told them of a glory which should appear in the newly erected temple, such as the former could not have exhibited in its proudest days. Centuries after, the promise was fulfilled, in the advent and frequent appearance there of the Saviour of the world.

But the recommencing prosperity of Judea seemed at one period about to receive a sudden and fatal termination. The danger and the deliverance recorded in the book of Esther have been assigned by different authors to various periods of the Persian history. Some have recognised in the Ahasuerus of that book Cambyses, the son of Cyrus; others, Artaxerxes Longimanus; and others different monarchs of the Persian empire. The rulers before the time of Darius Hystaspes are excluded by the fact, that mention is made, once and again in the book of Esther, of the seven hereditary counsellors of the empire, who were not raised to that dignity till the commencement of that monarch's reign. The most probable opinion identifies Ahasuerus with Xerxes, the son of Darius, and the celebrated invader of Greece. The account of the Persian king in the Jewish history precisely corresponds with the characteristics of weakness, voluptuousness, and

cruelty which Xerxes so remarkably united. The events, too, correspond with what is known from profane history of the third and seventh years of that monarch's reign.

Xerxes, in the third year of his government, summoned at Susa or Shushan, an assembly of all the chiefs of his empire, preparatory to the expedition which he meditated against Greece. For six months all the luxury of oriental despotism was displayed to successive throngs of nobles from the numerous provinces. A festival of seven days concluded the whole. On the last and probably most sumptuous day, the king, struck with a sudden fancy in the midst of his riotous indulgence, sent for his queen, Vashti, demanding her presence in a scene, where, to say nothing of the peculiar strictness of oriental customs with regard to female seclusion, the universal rules of delicacy forbade her to appear. She refused compliance; and the frivolous monarch, instead of admiring her nobleness of spirit, immediately divorced her, and passed a law commanding that all wives in Persia should obey their husbands.

In the seventh year of his reign, according to the testimony of profane history, Xerxes returned from his dishonorable Grecian campaign, and

gave himself up to every species of indulgence. In this seventh year the royal voluptuary distinguished among his favorites a Jewish maiden, Esther by name, and elevated her to the honors which Vashti had possessed. Immersed in pleasure he paid but slight attention to the demands of his high station, and confided his affairs implicitly to Haman, — not one of his constitutional advisers, the seven princes of Persia, but a foreigner, descended from one of those tribes which had nourished the most deadly enmity against the Jews. Haman, irritated by the opposition of Mordecai, the uncle of Esther, resolved to take a bloody revenge on the whole Jewish race. He obtained from the careless monarch, by the promise of extensive confiscations with which the royal treasury might be enriched, authority to act his own pleasure; and by public decree appointed a day on which all the Jews throughout the Persian dominions were to be destroyed.

It is unnecessary to describe the efforts, by which Esther gained, step by step, the favor of the king, till she finally appeared in direct hostility to the designs of Haman and effected his ruin. The absurd principle existed in the Persian government, that a law once passed could never be re-

pealed. What the king had decreed was held to be infallible and sacred ; and not even the king's own word could render it void. The evil of this senseless rule had been already illustrated in that instance, during the captivity, when Darius the Mede was forced to expose the life of Daniel, rather than revoke a law which he had unwarily enacted. Its evil results were then miraculously prevented. In the present instance it was otherwise. The king could not revoke his own edict against the Jews ; he could but issue a counter-edict, permitting them to defend themselves, and commanding his own officers to assist them. The Jews collectively escaped the threatened danger, but rencountres and massacres took place throughout the empire, and in Shushan alone the Jews slew eight hundred men. Such are the blessings of despotism ! The deliverance from the designs of Haman was commemorated among the Jews by a festival, called Purim, "lots," in reference to the lots cast by their enemy to fix the time for the execution of his bloody designs.

The thoughtful reader of the book of Esther will recognise the providence of God, acting in the events there recorded for the preservation of his people, without feeling called on to approve in every respect the conduct of those who were in-

struments of his all-controlling power. The mixture of patriotic energy and female timidity in the character of Esther is deeply interesting; but we cannot, must not sympathize with that spirit of revenge, which prompted her to demand a second day of slaughter, after the deliverance of her countrymen had been effected. We make, for her imperfect light, the allowances which the case permits, and rejoice in the possession of a more perfect law, the law of love, made known by Jesus Christ.

Xerxes, or Ahasuerus, was succeeded on the Persian throne by the mild and just Artaxerxes Longimanus. Under his government Ezra, and subsequently Nehemiah, were permitted to continue the restoration of the Jewish capital. Tradition ascribes to Ezra, with the appearance of probability, the collection of the sacred books of the Old Testament, and their arrangement in the canon of Scripture. Under these leaders and their successors, who combined the office of high priest with that of civil governor, the Holy Land gradually recovered from its sufferings; and if their earthly sovereignty was gone, the loss was more than compensated by the closer attachment of the people to their heavenly Monarch. They had in fact advanced in civilization and in-

telligence far beyond the days when their country was in its most flourishing political condition. They mourned the absence of the consecrated ark, and the gradual decline of the prophetic spirit; but the time was passed when these national distinctions were necessary. It is to this period that we trace the first systematic attempts to instruct the people in regular assemblies from the word of God. Synagogues were established, the precepts of the law eagerly sought after, and idolatry, to which their fathers had been so subject, was no more known among them. True it is that a narrow and exclusive spirit sometimes gave indication of that truth so often illustrated, that popular feeling can scarce ever forsake one error, without falling into the opposite extreme. But great was the advancement in intelligence and well-grounded piety, since the days when the wisest of their kings was seduced to build idol temples opposite to the very sanctuary which he had himself consecrated to the God of heaven.

The reëstablished Jews continued to enjoy peace in their dependence on the Persian empire, till the overthrow of that empire by Alexander the Great. That conqueror treated his new subjects with lenity, but his government did not long continue. At his death, Seleucus and Ptolemy, two

of his generals, respectively obtained possession of Syria and Egypt, while Judea experienced the evils attendant on its situation, as a province of small extent between two powerful kingdoms. It was alternately overrun by Syrians and Egyptians, and though remaining generally under the immediate government of the High Priest, paid tribute as a dependent province, either to the Ptolemies or the Seleucidæ. Antiochus III., surnamed the Great, successively conquered, lost, regained, and peaceably ceded the Holy Land. It returned under the dominion of his son Seleucus. In his reign, an attempt is said to have been made by his officer Heliodorus, to rob the temple of its sacred treasures. But in the very act of spoliation, the intruder was attacked by one on horseback in golden armor, while two attendants, seemingly more than mortal, assisted in his expulsion. The incident is related in the Apocrypha as miraculous, though it involves nothing which may not be explained on the supposition that human agency alone was employed.

Antiochus, second son of Antiochus the Great, received the name of Epiphanes, "the illustriously appearing," from his opportune arrival in Syria at the period when all were in confusion from the death of his brother Seleucus, and the dread of an

invasion from Egypt. He assumed the royal authority, usurping thus the right of his nephew Demetrius, who was then at Rome. A contest between two brothers, who claimed the office of High Priest, gave to Antiochus the first occasion for interfering in the religious affairs of the Jews. At the base request of one of these competitors, offered for the sake of gaining favor with the heathen monarch, some of the practices of Grecian idolatry were introduced into the Holy City. A Gymnasium, after the Grecian fashion, was erected, and those who sought influence in Judea began to affect the manners of their Syrian rulers.

Antiochus soon passed through Judea to invade Egypt; and was received with honor in Jerusalem. But while pursuing successfully his plan of invasion, a false report was circulated that he was dead. The joy with which these tidings were received in Judea, irritated the sanguinary monarch, then perhaps less than ever disposed to clemency, as he had just been obliged to turn from his career of conquest in Egypt, by a peremptory command from the Roman senate. He returned to Jerusalem, entered it pretending peaceful designs, but despoiled the temple of its costly ornaments, and polluted it by burning swine's flesh on the altar. He forbade the exercise of their an-

cient religious rites on pain of death, and forced numbers under the same penalty to violate the law by eating prohibited food, or sacrificing to idols. Torments of the most horrible kind were inflicted on those who remained faithful to their God and his holy law; and during the tyrant's stay not less than eighty thousand are said to have been butchered. After his return to Syria, the work of persecution was continued by the officers whom he left in Palestine. The Samaritan temple on Gerizim was consecrated to Jupiter Hellenius, by request, as the Jewish records assert, of the Samaritans themselves; and on the altar at Jerusalem was placed the statue of Jupiter Olympius. The walls of the city were broken down, and a castle built to command the temple on that hill, which afterwards retained the name of Acra, "the citadel." An edict for uniformity of opinion was issued by Antiochus, and persecution raged against the Jews throughout his empire.

At this period, when resistance seemed hopeless, and the faith in one true God was about to expire forever, the Almighty raised up to defend his people, a family of heroes. Mattathias, great-grandson of Asmoneus, a priest of the most distinguished class, dwelt with his five sons at Modin in the tribe of Dan. They resisted the command to of-

fer sacrifice to an idol, slew or put to flight the royal officers who were commissioned to enforce obedience, and retired to find safety in the desert. Many followed the example, but some fell victims to their too literal observance of the law. Attacked on the Sabbath day, they would make no resistance, but were smothered in the caves to the number of a thousand. Others escaped to Matathias, and under his command adopted the principle of defending themselves if attacked, even on the Sabbath. Success attended the aged chief. He passed through the country, demolishing the heathen altars and restoring the observance of the law, while his army continually increased in numbers and confidence. The Assideans (Hasidim, or pious men, as the religious and patriotic party were denominated,) joined him continually. After a year of glory he died, leaving the command of his army to his third son, Judas, surnamed Maccabeus. By this great leader the Syrian generals, Apollonius and Seron, were successively vanquished. Antiochus, whose affairs called him to Persia, left the reduction of Judea in charge with Lysias, with instructions utterly to ruin the country, and carry its inhabitants into slavery. Ptolemy, Nic-anor, and Gorgias, to whom the execution of this atrocious order was assigned, entered Judea with

forty-seven thousand soldiers, and an attendant company of slave merchants, ready to buy the anticipated captives. Judas, taking advantage of a separation of their forces, attacked, unexpectedly at night with three thousand men, the camp of Ptolemy and Nicanor. He had scarce completed his victory there, when Gorgias returned, with double the number of his exhausted troops; but the Syrians, seeing what had been done, were seized with a panic and fled. Lysias the next year invaded the Holy Land in person, with sixty-five thousand men, and experienced a defeat from Judas, at the head of ten thousand of his countrymen. And now the gallant Israelite went up to the temple, for whose purity he had fought. He found, in the words of Josephus, "the temple deserted, and its gates burnt down, and plants growing in the temple of their own accord, on account of its desertion." A Syrian garrison still occupied Acra. But appointing a portion of his troops to prevent interruption from that quarter, Judas repaired and purified the temple, and dedicated it anew to its ancient services, on the third anniversary of its desecration; a day from that time forth observed as a festival, and called the Feast of the Dedication, or the Feast of Lights.

About the same time Antiochus Epiphanes

died in Persia, where he had been disappointed in an attempt to rob the temple at Elymais. His last moments were embittered by this ill success, and by the intelligence that his armies in Judea had been defeated. His death was the signal for a civil contest which long continued to distract the Syrian monarchy. Demetrius, son of Seleucus, whose patrimony Antiochus had usurped, now returned to claim his right. Having conquered and put to death the young Antiochus Eupator, he again attempted the reduction of Judea. Nicanor, one of his commanders, was defeated and slain by Judas near Bethhoron. At this time a friendly understanding now commenced between the Jewish state and the republic of Rome, then in its period of highest vigor.

The Jewish hero soon after closed his glorious career, dying in battle against an overwhelming Syrian force near the village of Bethzetho. The command devolved upon his brother Jonathan, under whom the successes of the invaders were soon reversed. The disturbed condition of Syria facilitated the growth of the rising state. Demetrius was dethroned by Alexander Balas, who claimed to be a son of the tyrant Antiochus. Alexander yielded his throne and life to another Demetrius, and he in turn was expelled by Trypho, guardian to An-

tiochus, the son of Alexander. The competitors vied with each other in courting the assistance of the Jewish leader. Alexander Balas bestowed on Jonathan the office of high priest, which was now vacant, as Onias, the heir of the ancient pontifical family, had retired to Egypt, and founded a temple there. At length however, Jonathan was treacherously slain by Trypho, who, intending to usurp the throne of his master, Antiochus, feared the opposition of the wise and brave High Priest. Simon, his only surviving brother, was called to the high priesthood by the national voice. He refused to the Syrians the tribute which had hitherto been paid, and restored the security of Jerusalem, by driving out the foreign garrison, and reducing the hill of Acra below the level of the temple. He assisted Antiochus Sidetes, to recover from the murderer Trypho, the kingdom of his ancestors. War however broke out between the allies when their conquest was completed; but the Syrian troops were defeated by those of the Jewish chief, who ruled prosperously for eight years, and though he died by the treachery of a near relative, left his sacred and secular dignities to his son.

John Hyrcanus, son of Simon, shortly after his accession, was besieged in Jerusalem by Antio-

chus Sidetes. On this occasion we meet with one of those occurrences which sometimes shed the lustre of humanity around periods generally dark, and show how glorious are the trophies of moderation, peace, and mercy. During the siege the feast of tabernacles occurred; and at the request of Hyrcanus for a truce during its celebration, the Syrian king not only granted a suspension of hostilities, but sent into the city a magnificent offering for the sacred festival. The Jews, won by his moderation and piety, asked and received peace on equitable terms. Antiochus, who had acquired by his conduct at Jerusalem the name of Eusebes, or the Pious, fell soon after in an expedition against the Parthians. Hyrcanus now conquered Idumea, and incorporated its inhabitants with his own countrymen, requiring them to observe the Mosaic law. He conquered the Samaritans, and destroyed their rival temple on Mount Gerizim. Syria continued to be torn by civil contests, while Judea, profiting by the opportunity, rose to acknowledged independence.

But the glorious theocracy of the early Asmo-neans ended with John Hyrcanus. His son Judas or Aristobulus, assumed the title of king. His reign of a single year was polluted with the murder of his mother, and of his brother Antigo-

nus. Remorse hastened his death, and he left his blood-stained crown to his brother Alexander, surnamed Janneus. The reign of this prince, which continued twenty-seven years, was filled with continual wars against the Cyprians, Syrians, and Arabians, and against his own subjects, whom his cruelty drove into rebellion. But where the spirit of patriotism no longer animates the contest, the mere chronicle of battles and sieges possesses little to interest or to profit. In Syria, the branches of the royal family continued to depose and murder each other, and the people to waste their lives for the privilege of being oppressed by one Demetrius or Antiochus rather than another; while in Judea, the cruelties which had roused the lion-like spirit of Mattathias and his sons to resistance, were now imitated by their crowned descendant. The most valuable lesson we can derive from the survey, is to prize aright that freedom which is so hardly won, so easily lost.

Alexander Janneus left the government to his queen, Alexandra, his two sons being yet young. His last advise to her was to cultivate the friendship of the Pharisees, the sect highest in esteem with the mass of the people. John Hyrcanus had deserted them in consequence of an offence he had received, and his family since then had con-

tinued friendly to the Sadducees. Queen Alexandra followed the advice of her husband. Her reign of nine years was conducted by the advice in all things of the Pharisaic party, and was generally marked with temporal prosperity; but her continuance in the government, to the exclusion of her sons, occasioned misery to herself, and prepared for the speedy ruin of her family and nation. Hyrcanus, her elder son, was designed to fill the throne of his father Janneus; but his timid and indolent character unfitted him for the high station. Aristobulus, his brother, might perhaps have yielded a brother's assistance, had the heir of Alexander been seated on the throne at his father's death; but his high spirit could not brook the misrule of a female controled by hypocrites, and at the death of the queen, he was in actual rebellion against her government, with every probability of success.

With the death of Alexandra commences that stormy period in Jewish history which closed not till the final desolation of the land, and the demolition of the Holy City. The Roman entered, at first as a friend, but passed in rapid and fatal succession through the characters of patron, master, tyrant, and destroyer. In this period, too, arose One, who came humble in appearance, and whose name excited but little attention among the great

men of his age. But their power has passed away ; Scaurus and Pompey, the haughty generals of republican Rome, trampling on the rights of kings and people by the authority of a state which pretended to be free, — Cæsar, the great dictator. and they, as haughty and almost as powerful, by whom he fell, — the voluptuous triumvir, Antony, — Augustus, the victorious emperor of the known world, with his attendant kings and procurators, — have passed away in turn. One throne alone remains of those which that age established, and that throne shall remain forever.

CHAPTER V.

HISTORY CONTINUED TO THE DEATH OF THE ELDER AGRIPPA.

Oh! hadst thou known thy day of grace, and flocked beneath the
wing

Of him who called thee lovingly, thine own anointed King!

Then had the tribes of all the world gone up thy pomp to see,
And glory dwelt within thy gates, and all thy sons been free.

Heber.

THE political geography of Palestine had undergone, at this period, important changes. The descendants of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, now occupied nearly the whole of that land which they had formerly shared with their brethren of the kingdom of Israel. The southern portion, however, still retained, as distinguished from the rest, the name of Judea, though that word was frequently used to designate the whole of Palestine. The central portion, bearing the

name of Samaria, was inhabited by the descendants of those colonists whom the Assyrians had brought thither, intermixed with the remnants of the ten tribes. Between this people and the Jews, a fierce antipathy existed, exemplified in many occurrences recorded in the New Testament. Galilee, the most northern portion west of Jordan, embraced the territory formerly occupied by the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar. The mountainous northern part of this province was distinguished by the name of Upper Galilee, or Galilee of the Gentiles; while the southern section bore the title of Lower Galilee. East of the Jordan, the country bore in an extended sense the name of Perea, though that designation was peculiarly applied to its southern portion. Its northern part was divided into several provinces, of which it is difficult to ascertain with precision the relative situation. The name Batanea (anciently Bashan) appears to have designated the country immediately east of the lake Gennesareth. Eastward from this was Trachonitis, while Auranitis lay north of both, and Iturea extended south of Trachonitis, and between Batanea and Arabia. The name Decapolis appears to have been applied to the whole region westward from the Sea of Galilee, for the "ten

cities," which are included by geographers within its limits, are widely scattered through the provinces already enumerated. Perhaps it was in a less extended sense applied to the district south of Batanea, and between Iturea and the lower extremity of lake Gennesareth. The region called Abilene lay beyond the limits of Palestine, north-west from the city of Damascus.

On the death of Alexandra, Hyrcanus ascended the throne ; but found a strong opponent in the active and popular Aristobulus. Deserted by many of his soldiers, and besieged in the temple, he was induced to resign his kingdom and retire to private life. And here the contest might have ceased, and many years of suffering have been spared the nation, but for the intriguing faithfulness of one whose family was destined to bear an important part in the events of coming years. Antipater, an Idumean, had acquired the confidence of Hyrcanus, and exercised over his feeble mind an unbounded influence. He persuaded him that his life was in danger in Jerusalem, and induced him to take refuge with Aretas, king of Arabia. Assisted by Aretas, Hyrcanus reëntered Judea, and besieged his brother in Jerusalem. And here for the first time was an opportunity given to the Romans, for exercising in the affairs

of Palestine that system of interference by which, under the pretence of friendship, they had subjected to their dominion so large a portion of the world. Amicable relations had existed between the Roman and the Jewish states, from the time of Judas Maccabeus; but not till this period had a Roman chief given law in Judea. The celebrated Pompey was, at this time, commanding in Asia, and Scaurus and Gabinius, his lieutenants, were in Syria with a portion of the Roman forces. To them the contending brothers applied, each endeavouring to gain their assistance with offers of money. Scaurus decided in favour of Aristobulus; but his superior, Pompey, who shortly after came to Damascus, gave again a solemn hearing to the cause. Besides the rival brothers, many of the nation appeared at his tribunal petitioning for the restoration of that republican government which they had enjoyed in the days of the earlier Asmoneans. Pompey, without coming at first to a full decision, inclined so much to the party of Hyrcanus, that Aristobulus, alarmed, made preparations for war. He subsequently submitted, came to Pompey, and promised that Jerusalem should be surrendered; but his adherents there would not fulfil the engagement which he had formed. The Jewish prince was

consequently thrown into prison by Pompey, and the city taken. The heathen victor entered the temple, and penetrated to the holy of holies, which even the national high priest was not permitted to enter, except on the day of expiation. He however caused the temple to be purified, and took no portion of the treasures which he found there. He restored Hyrcanus to the civil and religious dignity of the high priesthood, but did not permit him to resume the title of king. He deprived Judea of much valuable territory, which he annexed to Syria, now a Roman province; and rendered the Jewish nation tributary to the Romans. Thus did the ambition of the later Asmoneans deprive the country of that liberty, to gain which their glorious ancestors had so bravely fought.

Hyrcanus, or rather Antipater in his name, now governed the country under the Romans. Aristobulus was carried prisoner to Rome; but on the way thither, his son Alexander escaped, and returned to excite new disturbances in Judea. Not long after, Aristobulus himself escaped, but was reconquered, and sent again to Rome. The attempts at insurrection were suppressed by the Roman soldiery under Gabinius. The celebrated Crassus, who succeeded this commander, plun-

dered the temple of immense wealth. Marching against the Parthians, Crassus was defeated and slain; but the remnants of his army, under Cassius, returned through Judea, and carried thirty thousand of the inhabitants into slavery. Such was the justice and clemency of those conquerors of the world!

Meanwhile that mighty convulsion drew nigh, which filled the Roman world with blood, to place it finally at the disposal of Julius Cæsar. That usurper, having become master of Rome, set Aristobulus at liberty, that he might invade Judea, which, under Hyrcanus, adhered to the interests of Pompey and the senate. But Aristobulus was poisoned, and his son Alexander not long after beheaded, by the adherents of Pompey. Cæsar, after the decisive battle of Pharsalia, pursued his vanquished enemy into Egypt. The politic Antipater, by espousing instantly the successful side, and joining Cæsar with a Jewish force, prevented the storm that seemed likely to burst upon Judea; and when Antigonus, the surviving son of Aristobulus, came to Cæsar with complaints of the wrongs suffered by his family, he found the conqueror prejudiced in favor of Hyrcanus and Antipater. The latter now took an important step towards the subsequent elevation

of his family. His two sons, Phasael and Herod, were appointed to the governments, respectively, of Jerusalem and of Galilee. The administration of Herod was so severe as to cause an attempt to bring him to trial; but the power of his family was too firmly established to be overthrown by popular discontent.

Another revolution took place at Rome. Cæsar was slain in the senate house; and Cassius came into Judea with demands for pecuniary supplies to an extent almost ruinous. Antipater and his sons were successful in making Cassius their friend, but Antipater soon after died by poison. On the subsequent defeat of Brutus and Cassius, Herod was still more successful in gaining the favor of Antony, who commanded in the east. The two sons of Antipater, were appointed to the government of Judea, with the title of tetrarchs. The Jews remonstrated against the transfer of their allegiance to the family of a foreign adventurer; but the Roman sword silenced their opposition.

Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, now appeared again, assisted by an army of Parthians. They overran the country and took captive Hyrcanus, and Phasael the brother of Herod. Phasael died by his own act. Hyrcanus was sent to Parthia,

having first been deprived of his ears, that he might thus be incapacitated for the office of High Priest. Herod, forced to fly, obtained from the Roman senate the title of king, and an army to support his claims. After a war of three years, Jerusalem was taken by Herod and Sosius the Roman general. Antigonus, made prisoner, was beheaded by command of Antony; and Herod, called the Great, was placed upon the Jewish throne.

There existed still a family, in which the two branches of the Asmonean house were united. Alexander, son of Aristobulus, had married Alexandra, daughter of Hyrcanus. Their children were Mariamne and Aristobulus. The new king had connected himself with the ancient family by marrying Mariamne. He was prevailed on subsequently to invest the young Aristobulus with the high priesthood. But his jealousy was excited when he witnessed the enthusiasm which everywhere greeted the appearance of this last heir to the Asmonean race; and he commenced a course of the darkest domestic crimes that history records, by causing Aristobulus to be drowned while bathing. The mother of the murdered prince appealed for vengeance to the justice of Antony; but Herod found means to retain the

friendship of the unprincipled triumvir. He next, after gaining an important victory over the Arabians, put to death the venerable Hyrcanus, the benefactor of his father and himself. The old man had been prevailed on to concert measures for escaping to the Arabians, and his age and misfortunes could obtain him no pity in the eyes of the jealous tyrant.

The battle of Actium had now transferred supreme dominion to Augustus. Herod hastened to meet the conqueror; and, by a master-stroke of courageous policy, secured his favor. He met him with dignity; justified his past connexion with Antony, his benefactor, and submitted to Augustus not so much in the style of one who had reason to tremble for his crown and life, as in that of a prince whom his conqueror could not bend by force, but who would give his friendship and faithful assistance to a generous enemy. Augustus was charmed with his independent tone, and dismissed him honorably to the enjoyment of the kingdom which he seemed so well to deserve. But he had not long returned to Judea, before he exhibited again the dark traits of his singular, powerful, but atrocious character. His next victim was his wife Mariamne, whom he loved passionately, but with the wildest jealousy. She saw

in him the murderer of her grandfather Hyrcanus, and her brother Aristobulus; she knew that he had twice given private, conditional orders for her own death; her high spirit burst forth in reproaches which irritated him to frenzy. After her death remorse drove him to the verge of madness. He tried in vain to banish the thought of her by frequent feasts and more than usual magnificence. He then secluded himself from public affairs, and called on the name of Mariamne, and ordered his servants to summon her, as if she were yet alive. A pestilence at the same time carried off many of his friends, and he thought he saw in it the anger of God for his crime. He went into desert places under pretence of hunting, that he might mourn alone. At length he fell into a violent distemper, accompanied with mental derangement. On his partial recovery, new victims died by his fury. Alexandra, the mother of Mariamne, was the first: she suffered for intrigues carried on during his sickness. Others were put to death from political jealousy; for Herod's mind had now become possessed with one single fear, that of losing the kingdom which he had gained with so much toil and blood. He now undertook extensive public works. He endeavoured especially to introduce the Greek and Roman customs, erecting theatres

and trophies, and introducing fights of wild beasts, with each other, and with condemned criminals. His violation of the national customs led to a conspiracy from which he narrowly escaped. He rebuilt at this time the cities of Samaria and Strato's tower, giving to the former the name of Sebaste, and to the latter that of Cæsarea; both in honor of the emperor, whose name, Augustus, was rendered in Greek by the word *Sebastos*. These cities he built entirely in the Roman style, erecting temples to the honor of the heathen gods, and statues dedicated to Rome and to Cæsar. At the same time he showed toward his subjects some of the traits of a good sovereign, relieving from his granaries those who suffered by a famine. To restore his wavering popularity, he rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem with greater magnificence than it had ever exhibited.

But now commenced misunderstandings in Herod's family which stained the later years of his reign with as dark a hue as the period when he shed the blood of Hyrcanus and Mariamne. He had many sons; — one, Antipater, by a previous marriage to that with Mariamne. That unhappy princess had given birth to two, Alexander and Aristobulus. The claim of these young men to the royal dignity was stronger on account of their

descent, through their mother, from the Asmonean family ; while Antipater, as the eldest son of Herod, conceived his rights to be superior. Salome, the king's sister, who had been the bitter enemy of Mariamne, continued to persecute her sons. The jealous, cruel, and unhappy monarch was persuaded that the two younger princes had designs against his power. Their high spirit, which warmly resented the intrigues against them, was regarded as a proof of guilt ; and, after many delays, the order was issued for the execution of them both. Antipater, by whose machinations in part the crime had been effected, did not enjoy the fruits of his treachery. His intrigues were detected, and a scene of guilt among the members of the royal family was laid open, which might have caused the most oppressed among Herod's subjects to bless the God of Israel that he was happier than the powerful monarch. The days of the miserable king were drawing near their termination. A recent sedition in Jerusalem had given increased alarm to his suspicious mind ; his eldest son was in prison, awaiting the deserved sentence of death ; and Herod well knew that he should soon be called away, and that not one tear of genuine sorrow would be shed for him throughout his dominions. He ordered the chiefs among the people to be as-

sembled in the circus at Jericho; then having ordered the doors to be closed upon them, gave command that they should all be massacred the moment he should expire; in order, as he said, that the people might mourn at his death. He then directed the execution of Antipater, and the death of the guilty son preceded by five days only, that of the equally guilty and miserable father. The insane command of the dead tyrant was not regarded; and the prisoners in the circus were released.

Not long before the death of Herod, the event, anxiously expected, had taken place, the birth of the Messiah. The jealous tyrant had been excited, by the information received from the eastern magi, to seek the life of one who had been thus early marked out as an object of national attention and hope. Joseph and Mary, warned of God, fled into Egypt with the infant Saviour; but the cruel orders of the king were executed in the murder of those children in Bethlehem, whose age was such as to excite suspicion. The number of the sufferers cannot probably have been great; and when we recal the numerous atrocities with which the last years of Herod were clouded, and the little value which rulers in that age appear to have placed on the lives of their people, we have no

cause to wonder that Jewish and Roman historians make no mention of the massacre.

By the appointment of Herod, his dominions were divided among his sons, Archelaüs possessing Judea proper, Samaria, and Idumea; Antipas, Galilee and Peræa proper, and Philip the northern provinces of Auranitis, Trachonitis, and Batanea. Augustus sanctioned this division, restricting Archelaüs however to the title of ethnarch, — “ruler of the nation,” and allowing that of tetrarch, “ruler of a fourth part,” to his brothers. The reign of Archelaüs continued but nine years; after which, from complaints brought against him of misgovernment and tyranny, he was banished by the emperor to Vienne in Gaul. Antipas and Philip continued to rule their respective provinces. The former is the Herod most frequently mentioned by the Evangelists; the prince who at one period sought the counsel of John the Baptist, and who afterwards put him to death; the same to whom our Saviour applied the title of fox,* from the craftiness of his character; and the same to whom Jesus was sent by Pilate, previous to his crucifixion. Of Philip, the tetrarch, no mention is made in the New Testa-

* Luke xiii. 32.

ment, further than to name him with other rulers in the date assigned to the preaching of John the Baptist.* He was a just and mild prince. There was another son of the deceased king, named Herod Philip, who lived in a private station. He was the husband of that Herodias, whom Herod Antipas criminally espoused, and who in revenge for the bold opposition of John the Baptist, procured the death of that prophet. Herodias was herself a descendant of Herod the Great, being daughter of that Aristobulus, son of Herod and Mariamne, who was put to death by his father. She had a brother named Agrippa, who was brought up at Rome, in the court of Tiberius, and exhibited in his earlier years the character of a worthless spendthrift. He cultivated assiduously the friendship of Caius Caligula, and by some unguarded expressions of attachment to him, incurred the anger of the jealous Tiberius, and was thrown into prison. Shortly after, Tiberius died; Caligula became emperor, and, releasing his faithful adherent from prison, conferred on him the title of king, with the territories which had belonged to the tetrarch Philip. This sudden favor of fortune to her spendthrift brother,

* Luke iii. 1.

excited the jealousy of Herodias, who in an evil hour urged her husband Antipas to seek similar advancement at Rome. The attempt led to an inquiry into the conduct of Antipas, which resulted in his banishment to Gaul. Thither Herodias accompanied him, with more disinterested attachment than could have been expected from her previous character.

From the banishment of Archelaüs, Judea and Samaria had been governed by a succession of Roman procurators, under the superior control of the proconsuls of Syria. The first of these proconsuls, after the banishment of Archelaüs, was Cyrenius or Quirinius, the same who appears to have superintended the enrolment at the time of our Saviour's birth, nine years previous.* He was accompanied by Coponius, as procurator of Judea. Under their administration a tax was levied which excited some among the Jews to resistance, under the persuasion of Judas of Galilee.† This man, with Saddouk, a Pharisee, appeared at the head of a party who maintained the unlawfulness of their present subjection to the Romans, and commenced the propagation of those doctrines which afterwards, embraced by numbers

* Luke ii. 2.

† Acts v. 27.

throughout the nation, urged them on to their final unhappy revolt. The sedition of Judas was suppressed, but they who held his principles continued, under the name of Zealots, to maintain and disseminate them.

The office of procurator in Judea was filled, after the return of Coponius, successively by Marcus Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, and Pontius Pilate. Under the government of the latter, some disturbances took place, which were repressed by him with Roman promptness and disregard of human life. To some occasion of this kind, reference is made in the Evangelists, where certain Galileans are mentioned "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." * But the event which has rendered this period, and the name of this governor for ever memorable, was the death of Him who came to establish the kingdom of peace and love, and in whose sacrifice the Roman, stern as he was, struggled long before he could silence the voice of conscience by the dictates of an unprincipled policy. The rejection of the Messiah, which that deed consummated, decided the fate of Judea. To prove the truth of the system which had been rejected, it

* Luke xiii. 1.

was necessary that the peculiar divine favor they had so long enjoyed should in the sight of all the world be transferred from the Jewish nation, to the new, universal, and spiritual faith. Visibly and fearfully was that transfer made.

After the recal of Pilate, which occurred about the close of Tiberius's reign, Vitellius and Petronius were successively governors of Syria. The latter was sent by the tyrannical Caligula, with orders to enforce his impious command, that his statue should be placed in the temple at Jerusalem, and worshipped as a god. The nation, driven to despair, yet steadily refused compliance with the edict, and declared to Petronius their willingness to die, rather than commit the crime of idolatry. The governor, moved by their representations, nobly assumed the responsibility of suffering the emperor's command to remain unexecuted. Herod Agrippa, who was then at Rome, and high in the favor of Caligula, exerted his influence, and procured the atrocious edict to be repealed. But the tyrant could not forgive his noble-minded governor. A ship sailed from Italy with the order for Petronius to be put to death; but it arrived too late, for a faster sailing vessel had already brought the intelligence that Caligula himself was no more

Claudius now succeeded to the empire ; and Agrippa was advanced to the government of all Judea. He ruled there generally to the satisfaction of his subjects, though the portions of his conduct recorded in Scripture, give an idea of his character by no means favorable. He was the Herod who " slew James the brother of John with the sword," and imprisoned Peter, intending to sacrifice him also. His death was in character with the fluctuations between prosperity and adversity which had marked his life. Entering the theatre at Cæsarea, he addressed the people, while the beams of the rising sun were brilliantly reflected back from his robes of silver tissue. The multitude exclaimed, " It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." The king lent a too willing ear to the impious flattery, when he was suddenly struck with sickness, and, after five days of excruciating pain, expired. He left a son of the same name, who was some time afterwards made king of those northern provinces which had formed the tetrarchy of Philip. This was the king Agrippa before whom, his sister Berenice, and Festus, Paul made that noble defence recorded in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts.

CHAPTER VI.

HISTORY CONTINUED TO THE CONQUEST OF
JUDEA BY TITUS.

"A sound of woe in Salem ! mournful cries
Rose from her dwellings, youthful cheeks were pale,
Tears flowing fast from dim and aged eyes,
And voices mingling in tumultuous wail ;
Hands raised to heaven in agony of prayer,
And powerless wrath, and terror, and despair."

Mrs. Hemans.

ON the death of the elder Agrippa, Judea was again reduced to the immediate government of the Romans. The procurators Cuspius Fadus and Tiberius Alexander, exercised successively their authority without the occurrence of any event of great importance. Under Fadus, an impostor, named Theudas, was slain, who had promised to his followers a miraculous passage across the Jordan, like that which had been granted to the Israelites under Joshua. Alexan-

der, who was himself a deserter from the Jewish faith, put to death two of the sons of that Judas of Galilee who had led the insurrection in the proconsulship of Cyrenius. But under the following procurator, Ventidius Cumanus, a succession of insults on the part of the soldiery produced a high degree of popular irritation. In the temple, one of the Roman guard outraged the feelings of the assembled nation, at the solemn feast of the passover, and, in the tumult that ensued, numbers were slain by the soldiers, and still greater numbers crushed to death. Shortly after, a Roman soldier, in one of the villages, insulted and burnt the book of the law. To arrest the excitement which this outrage caused, Cumanus was obliged to have the offender capitally punished. A more serious difficulty arose from the procurator's negligence in leaving unpunished the murder of a Galilean by some Samaritans. The populace collected in Jerusalem at the festival, assumed the task of vengeance to themselves, marched towards Samaria, and committed great excesses. Cumanus suppressed the tumult with an armed force. His superior officer, Ummidius Quadratus, proconsul of Syria, inflicted severe punishments on the leaders of the uproar, but sent Cumanus and one of his officers prisoners

to Rome. The emperor banished Cumanus, and punished capitally some of those who were most obnoxious to the Jews.

Claudius Felix succeeded as procurator ; and shortly after, Nero ascended the imperial throne. The government of Felix was marked by rapacity and injustice ; but he exhibited the vigor of the Roman character in repressing opposition. An Egyptian Jew, among others, led out numbers from Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives, declaring to them that the walls of the city would fall down at his command. Felix defeated him and slew four hundred of his followers ; but the leader escaped. When, during the government of the same Felix, the apostle Paul was arrested in the temple, the Roman officer who first examined him supposed that he was the Egyptian impostor.* Many other false prophets are said to have appeared about this time. They increased the excitement which had been kindled among the people, and prepared them for the fatal events which were to follow, at the same time fulfilling the prophecy of Jesus, that such men should arise and deceive many.

Felix was at length recalled, and Portius Fes-

* Acts xxi. 38.

tus appointed in his room. His just and energetic government gave a hope of better times to the unhappy Jews. The compliment paid him by the orator Tertullus* was deserved, for by his activity in the pursuit of robbers who infested the country, and in repressing promptly those who commenced seditious undertakings, the people "enjoyed great quietness."

Festus died in Judea, and was succeeded by Albinus. This procurator instead of protecting the people, enriched himself by uniting with their plunderers. He received bribes from robbers for liberty to continue their crimes, and malefactors in the prisons were released if their friends could afford to buy the favor of the governor. Yet was his conduct moderate compared with that of his successor, Gessius Florus, under whose misgovernment the people were driven into open resistance. Fit delegate of a Nero, "he thought it but a petty offence to get money out of single persons, so he spoiled whole cities, and did almost publicly proclaim it the country over, that they had liberty given them to turn robbers, upon this condition, that he might go shares with them in the spoils they got."†

* Acts xxiv. 2.

† Josephus; Wars of the Jews, B. II. ch. xiv.

At length, Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, approached Jerusalem. Thousands gathered round him, to complain to him, as the superior officer, of the conduct of Florus. He gave them promises in general terms, and returned to Antioch. There was a quarrel of long standing between the Jewish and heathen inhabitants of Cæsarea. Florus, who should have interposed, suffered the Jews to be driven from their synagogue and from the city. About the same time, he sent to take a part of the sacred treasure from the temple. On this insult, the public indignation burst forth. Men went round from house to house, in mockery of the rapacious governor, pretending to beg alms for Florus. The incensed tyrant entered Jerusalem with his troops, refused to receive the submission which the inhabitants offered, rejected even the earnest supplications of the princess Berenice, sister of king Agrippa, massacred some and tortured others. The priests and leading citizens besought the people to submit, as ruin seemed to be the certain consequence of opposition. The people submitted, but Florus himself forced them into new murmurs, and the slightest murmur was the signal for massacre. The people rose again, and Florus at length retired to Cæsarea, under circumstances which

seemed to indicate that he had found his strength inadequate to his tyrannical designs.

King Agrippa now offered his mediation. His dominions lay in the northern section of the Holy Land, but his influence was extensive in Jerusalem, from his descent, his rank, and his general character. His representations of the hopelessness of a contest with the Roman power were listened to with respect, until he suggested the idea of submitting again to Florus. But the name of that detested tyrant, and the proposition of receiving him again, overthrew all that Agrippa had labored to establish. The king was insulted and excluded from the city by the multitude.

The revolt was now begun. The fortress of Masada was taken by the Jews, and its Roman garrison slain. The majority of the priests determined to receive no gift or sacrifice for the temple from a foreigner ; — a rule, though general in its terms, yet directly levelled against the Romans, and implying a renunciation of their authority. The castle of Antonia, adjoining the temple, was yet occupied by a Roman garrison ; it was taken, and the garrison put to the sword. The insurgents then pressed upon the soldiers of king Agrippa, and besieged them in a palace or castle on Mount Zion. They had found a leader

in Manahem, the surviving son of Judas of Galilee; who having armed a party of his adherents from the captured arsenal of Masada, appeared in Jerusalem with royal state. Under his command the siege of the palace was pressed with vigor. The king's troops at length capitulated, and the Romans who were among them escaped to the towers of Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamne. But the people were not prepared to yield to the assumptions of Manahem. He was slain, and Eleazar, son of a former high priest, was regarded as the head of the insurrection. The remnant of the Roman troops surrendered; and were, in violation of good faith, put to death.

Meanwhile, the revolt of Jerusalem called into action at once all the feelings of hatred with which the Jews were from their peculiar habits regarded wherever they were found in the same city with heathens. At Cæsarea, at Scythopolis, and at Alexandria, thousands were slain; and the villages bordering between Syria and Judea were filled with blood, shed alternately by the contending parties.

Cestius Gallus now advanced toward Jerusalem, filling with slaughter the region through which he passed. He obtained possession of the

suburb Bezetha and of part of Zion, and those in Jerusalem who had from the first despaired of the unequal contest, were looking with a melancholy hope to see him complete the conquest of the city, when suddenly, unaware of his own advantages, the Roman commander began his retreat. Gathering courage from his obvious alarm, the Jews pursued him. The country was up in arms. Overtaken in the narrow passes of Bethhoron, Cestrius was compelled to turn his retreat into a precipitate and disgraceful flight. Leaving behind his military stores and engines, and the dead bodies of five thousand of his soldiers, the president of Syria escaped with life, but without honor, and the close of the first campaign saw Judea unconquered, and thus far triumphant.

The insurgents proceeded to organize themselves with greater regularity, and prepare for the invasion which they foresaw. The command within Jerusalem was entrusted to Joseph, the son of Gorion, and Ananus who had been high priest. Joseph, the son of Matthias, better known as Josephus the historian, was made governor of Galilee, and other sections of the country were entrusted to different commanders. Fortifications were erected and every preparation made for the

ensuing campaign. About the same time, according to the testimony of Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, the Christians in Jerusalem, perceiving the time to be at hand which their Master had foretold, retreated from the city to Pella, a city beyond Jordan in the kingdom of Agrippa. In many parts of the country much disorder prevailed. Simon, son of Gioras, with the zealots who accompanied him, tyrannized over the country between Jerusalem and the Jordan, and set at defiance the more moderate rulers in Jerusalem. In Galilee, the government of Josephus was much disturbed by factions, and it was only by constant activity that his authority could be maintained.

The revolt of Judea called for no ordinary commander on the part of the Romans. Vespasian, the most able general of the empire, was appointed by Nero to the task of its suppression. He entered Judea from its northern frontier. A battle, whose event was unfavorable to the Jews, had already taken place near Ascalon. At Ptolemais, Vespasian received the submission of Sepphoris, a chief city of Galilee, and was joined by his son Titus with forces from Egypt. After taking the city of Gadara, and slaughtering without mercy all its inhabitants, the Roman com-

mander formed the siege of Jotapata. Thither Josephus threw himself with the forces at his disposal, and maintained, with great ability, a protracted defence. This city was in the northern and mountainous part of Galilee, apparently impregnable from natural situation and strongly fortified. The Romans constructed roads with immense labor, by which their engines of attack might be brought through the rugged country around. The besieged, in frequent sallies burnt their machines of war, and scattered their ranks; they hung over their walls sacks filled with chaff, to break the force of the battering rams, and poured boiling oil on the heads of those who attempted to scale the walls. While this siege was in progress, the neighbouring city of Japha was taken by the Roman troops under Trajan and Titus; and numbers of the Samaritans, having entrenched themselves on Mount Gerizim, were attacked and slaughtered by the Romans under Cerealis.

At length, Vespasian, profiting by the information of a deserter, assaulted Jotapata at an hour when the greater part of its remaining defenders were overpowered with sleep. The city was taken, and its male inhabitants massacred, with the

exception of Josephus and a single companion. The manner of their escape does more honor to the Jewish commander's cunning, than to his patriotism or his veracity. He had taken refuge with forty others in a cave. Having endeavoured in vain to persuade his companions to surrender, and perceiving that his own life was in danger from them, he suggested that they should draw lots which should become the executioner of his fellow, and that the survivor of all should put himself to death. Josephus and one companion alone survived, and these consented to yield to the Romans, on assurances of safety. Brought before Vespasian, the Jewish chief assumed the tone of a prophet, and announced the future elevation of his conqueror to the imperial throne ;— an event highly probable in itself, since the reigning sovereign was universally execrated, and Vespasian was both the ablest soldier in the empire, and at the head of its most powerful army. The prediction procured for Josephus honorable treatment, and finally high favor from him whose elevation he had predicted. It is remarkable that many Christians should have regarded the Jewish leader as in this instance truly inspired, since elsewhere he applies to Vespasian prophecies which, according to the consent

of the whole Christian world, received their fulfilment in the person of Jesus.*

The conqueror now took possession of Joppa ; and laid waste the surrounding country. Then returning northward, he received the submission of Tiberias, and in a bloody battle chiefly in boats on the lake of Gennesareth, those who had fled from Tiberias, and the insurgent party of Taricheæ, were destroyed. The majority of those who inhabited the latter city peaceably submitted, on a solemn pledge of good faith from the Romans. But that pledge was violated. The old and feeble, to the number of twelve hundred, were massacred in cold blood, by the command and under the eye of Vespasian. More than thirty-six thousand were reduced to slavery, besides numbers who were left at the disposal of Agrippa, and whom that prince sold into bondage.

The cities of Galilee now generally surrendered. Gamala and Gischala alone remained. The former of these, built on a precipitous hill and strongly fortified, cost the Romans many lives before they obtained possession of it. Numbers of its inhabitants perished by throwing themselves from the precipices, and the Roman sword destroyed

* See Wars of the Jews, Book VI. Ch. V. 4.

the rest. Gischala obtained a milder treatment. John, the Jewish commander, by promises of surrender obtained from Titus a truce for the observance of the Sabbath, and availing himself of this opportunity, escaped with his troops to Jerusalem. The unarmed inhabitants then opened their gates to the Romans, and were taken under their protection.

Jerusalem was at this time under the control of a faction, who assumed to themselves the name of *Zealots*. Their principles, which permitted every man to punish on the spot offenders against the law, proved a license to the most dreadful abuses. They made the temple their strong-hold; and in that sacred edifice and its extensive courts, they were at length besieged by the indignant people, under the direction of Ananus the former high priest. The people won the court of the Gentiles, and the Zealots were driven within the more sacred enclosures. At this juncture John of Gischala, the chief who had escaped from that city by a breach of faith, deserted to the Zealots, and persuaded them to call in the Idumeans to their aid. This nation, descended from the ancient Edomites, had been, since the time of the early Asmoneans, incorporated in the Jewish state. Their troops advanced, at the call of the Zealots,

to assist in quelling the party who, it was asserted, intended to give up the city to the Romans. Assisted by these allies, the Zealots again became masters of the city, Ananus and the other chiefs of his party were slain, and the horrors of anarchy recommenced worse than before. The Idumeans, at length, disgusted with the service in which they had been employed, retired. New factions then arose among the Zealots. They appeared to vie with each other which should do most in adding to the miseries of the people; and the most atrocious of them regarded John of Gischala as their leader.

Another party, meantime, professing the same violent principles, was increasing in strength under the command of Simon the son of Gioras, who, from the fortress of Masada, had been spreading ruin around the country. He now approached Jerusalem, within whose walls the party of John was committing unrestrained every excess which passion and cruelty could suggest. Those who escaped from the tyrant within the city, fell into the power of the tyrant without. The inhabitants at length, thinking any change must be for the better, admitted Simon within the walls. John and his party were again driven within the extensive circuit of the temple. Simon and his adher-

ents occupied the rest of the city. Constant warfare took place between them, and the streets of the once holy city were filled with blood.

Vespasian, meantime, had gone on from conquest to conquest, having received the submission of Gadara, the chief city of Peræa, and every other place of importance, except Jerusalem, Herodium, Masada, and Macherus. He had watched with an attentive eye the progress of events at a distance. Nero had been slain. To Galba his successor, Vespasian had sent his son Titus with professions of obedience, but before the young commander could reach Italy, he heard that Galba too had fallen, and returned to Palestine. The reign of Otho was equally brief, and when the unworthy Vitellius was placed on the throne, Vespasian hesitated no longer. He accepted from his army the title of Emperor, which they accorded him with enthusiasm. He proceeded to Alexandria, and there receiving information of the success of his party in Italy, sailed for Rome, leaving with Titus the task of completing the reduction of Judea.

Two years had elapsed after the entrance of Vespasian into Judea, before Titus approached Jerusalem for the purpose of forming its siege. The factions within the city were at this time three in

number. Simon occupied the greater part; the hill of Moriah, covered with the courts and buildings of the temple was in possession of John, except the sacred edifice itself and the court of the priests, which were occupied by another party of the Zealots, under the command of Eleazar. The three parties continually harassed each other, and though the morning and evening sacrifices were regularly offered, the blood of the worshipper was often mingled with that of the victim he presented. On the first approach of Titus, the feuds within the city were suspended by the common danger, but they soon broke forth again. Jerusalem was filled to overflowing with those who had come thither, some to celebrate the passover, others to seek refuge from the invaders. Many of the storehouses containing grain had been burnt in the fury of the contending factions, and thus it soon became apparent that the distress of famine must be added to the other evils by which the unhappy city was surrounded.

The enemy on their first approach were gallantly received. Titus, coming near the city to view it, was surrounded, and with difficulty escaped. The troops were repeatedly annoyed and driven back, while engaged in fortifying their camp. At one time, they were decoyed near the

city, by appearances which led them to suppose that a revolution had taken place within, when suddenly immense numbers issued out upon them, and the disappointed Romans were driven back with loss to encounter a severe rebuke from their commander. Meantime John had availed himself of the opportunity given him by the celebration of the passover, to make his way into the inner court of the temple, and overpower the party of Eleazar, so that the factions were again reduced to two.

The battering engines were now advanced by the Romans, while machines for throwing darts and stones were employed to clear the walls of their defenders. The Jews, on their part, laid aside for awhile, their intestine dissensions, and turned against their enemies those military engines which Cestius had left behind him in his flight. They frequently sallied forth, burning the machines and driving back those by whom they were managed. The Romans had erected lofty towers, from which to assail the citizens with more advantage. One of these fell, and occasioned for a time, great alarm among the besieging army. Their attacks were directed against the wall of the northern suburb, Bezetha; and through this, the battering ram at length effected

a breach. Other walls however were still before them, and beyond those others still surrounded the most inhabited portion of the city, while the temple with the tower of Antonia, rose like a citadel above the whole. The second wall was taken, retaken by the Jews, and again mastered and demolished by the Romans. Then, before proceeding to attack the temple and the inmost wall of the city, Titus attempted to induce the inhabitants to surrender. An interval of a few days was allowed, while the troops were drawn out, in splendid order, to receive their pay. Josephus was instructed to approach the walls, and reason with his countrymen. His arguments were received with reproaches and threats. The famine meantime became more and more destructive. Numbers deserted to the Romans; and numbers, detected in the attempt or suspected of intending it, were put to death by their countrymen.

The attack was recommenced; and now the perseverance of the besieged induced Titus to adopt measures which no consideration can justify us in viewing as consistent with the reputation for humanity which his name has attained. Numbers, chiefly of the poorest and most inoffensive, driven by the extremity of hunger, came out to gather a scanty subsistence in the valleys. These

the Romans seized, scourged, tortured, and crucified, continuing to exercise the same barbarity with their prisoners, till "room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies."* This cruelty redoubled the energy of the besieged. They sallied forth, destroyed the engines and pulled down the walls of the besiegers. It was now determined by the Romans to erect a wall around the city, and thus leave to famine in some degree the completion of its ruin. The misery of the inhabitants had reached a height which even Titus could scarcely bear to contemplate. He called God to witness that he was not the author of these evils, as he looked on the piles of dead lying unburied in the ravines around the walls.

At length the tower of Antonia was taken, and an avenue thus opened through which access might be gained to the temple. Josephus was again employed to induce his countrymen to surrender; but confiding, as it would seem, in some miraculous deliverance at the last moment, they steadily refused. Some of the more distinguished of the moderate party however came forth, and having been kindly received by Titus, joined their

* Josephus, Jewish War, Book V. Chap. xi. 1.

influence to prevail on their infatuated fellow citizens. Titus offered to respect the sanctity of the temple, if the Jews would fight elsewhere; but every exertion was in vain, and the work of destruction proceeded. From Antonia the Romans ascended to the roof of the western cloisters in the court of the Gentiles. Thence they were driven by fire with terrible loss. About the same time there occurred in the city an incident, the most heart-rending proof of the misery existing there, — a mother, in the rage of hunger and madness, killed her own child, and used its flesh for food.

At length, one after another of the courts around the temple having been taken, Titus was still desirous to spare the sanctuary itself; but it was set on fire contrary to his orders, and every attempt to save it proved vain. The upper city soon shared the fate of the sections which had already fallen. The unhappy people received but little mercy, though the certainty of death or slavery was mercy compared with the sufferings they had endured. The city was demolished with the exception of three towers only, those of Phasaël, Hippicus, and Mariamne. Simon, having graced the triumph of the conqueror, was slain. John, who had earlier submitted, was condemned to per-

petual imprisonment. Thousands of the captives were slain in gladiatorial combats, those horrible exhibitions which expose to later ages the darkest trait in the dark Roman character.

The few remaining fortresses of the Jews were speedily captured by those to whom Titus left the task in charge. At Masada, a fearful sight met the Roman commander, as he entered with surprise the silent and apparently deserted castle. The inhabitants of both sexes and of every age, had fallen by each other's hands, rather than submit to captivity. Two women and five children alone remained alive.

Thus ended this dreadful contest, in which the terrors of foreign invasion were aggravated by domestic feuds. The reflections which as Christians we draw from this remarkable fulfilment of our Saviour's prophecies, should not render us insensible to the unhappy fate of the victims. Judea was punished thus fearfully for her rejection of the Messiah; or, to speak more accurately, it had become necessary, in order that the divinity of our Saviour's mission should be vindicated, that the city which had caused him to suffer should suffer in her turn. But few, if any, of those who fell beneath the sword of the Romans, could have borne a part in the rejection of Jesus, which took

place forty years before ; and if ever a war was justly undertaken and bravely waged, that praise must be awarded to the revolt of Judea from the Romans. The pen of Josephus was evidently biassed by the imperial favor he enjoyed, and which he wished to retain ; and no less by the recollection of the indignant scorn with which he had been treated by his countrymen, after he became an inmate of the Roman camp. But he could not suppress the narration of the perjury and massacre at Taricheæ, though he strives to apologize for his imperial patron ; he could not be silent on the crucifixions which Titus commanded, or pass unmentioned the fate of thousands slain in the Roman amphitheatres after the victory was won. Nor could he, though he might designate his own brave countrymen as seditious, robbers, or assassins, deny to them the character of faithful defenders of their native land. Had the Jews exhibited wisdom and unity in council, in a degree proportioned to their desperate valor in the field, — had they possessed one truly eminent leader, to whom all would have yielded, — had Agrippa been more ambitious, or Manahem more moderate, or John as merciful and wise as he was brave, the Roman thunder might have recoiled powerless from the rocks of Palestine. But Providence or-

dered otherwise, — and for the best. This terrible destruction fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus; the city, which was and would still have been the fiercest persecutor of his truth, was laid low, and in her stead arose throughout the world, the spiritual kingdom of the Prince of Peace.

CHAPTER VII.

MODERN HISTORY OF PALESTINE.

" — A Templar's knightly tomb.
He died, the sword in his mailed hand,
On the holiest spot of the Blessed Land,
Where the cross was damped with his dying breath;
When blood ran free as festal wine,
And the sainted air of Palestine
Was thick with the darts of death."

Halleck.

THE conquest of Judea by the arms of Titus concludes the history of the land so far as it is immediately connected with the sacred records of our religion; but since that time, Palestine has been the scene of many events of deep importance to the human race. Never, so far as we are able to trace, during this long period, has a distinct national character been possessed by the inhabitants of the Holy Land. It has been ruled in turn by Roman, Christian, Saracen, and Turk, and at all times been subject to the incursions of the

wandering Arabs; but never has it been held by a race who might with propriety be regarded as children of the soil. Lebanon, which has long been inhabited by the Druses and Maronites, with the country round Shechem or Naplose, where the scanty remnant of the ancient Samaritans yet exist, may be regarded as presenting the only exceptions to this general remark.

The Jews, however, retained, even after the subversion of their institutions, a degree of organization, under a government combining in a singular manner the political, the religious, and the literary character. Those among their Rabbis, or learned men, who had been fortunate enough to escape the sword of civil dissension, and that of the Roman conqueror, soon collected together, and received from their subdued and scattered countrymen, that reverence which their wisdom merited, joined with a degree of obedience to their temporal authority, which no one else could claim without provoking the jealousy of the conquerors. The Rabbis assembled first at Jamnia, a village in the territory of Dan. They employed themselves in instructing those who resorted to them, and in deciding questions of a civil nature which the people voluntarily submitted to their superior wisdom.

But in the reign of Trajan, the Jews had, by forty years of peace, recovered in some degree from their overthrow. The Roman empire was engaged in wars which withdrew its attention from the conquered race of Israel. Suddenly, in Cyprus, in Egypt, and in Mesopotamia, the Jews burst forth in insurrection. The most fearful massacres took place, both when the Jews rose against the unprepared inhabitants of the countries whither they had been sent, and when their hasty revolt was arrested by the Roman arms. Trajan died, and Hadrian ascended the imperial throne. The new emperor adopted measures of great severity against the Jews, prohibiting the exercise of their religion, and announcing his intention of building a Roman city on the site of Jerusalem. At this intelligence, the Jews who still remained in Palestine rushed to arms. They found a leader in one, the most remarkable of those who have at different periods claimed falsely the office of Messiah. His real name is unknown, but he assumed that of Barcochab, "son of the star," in reference to the prophecy of Balaam that there should come a star out of Jacob.* The impostor possessed himself of the ruins of Jerusalem, assumed the

*Numbers, xxiv. 17.

title of king, and for four years resisted the Roman power. Jerusalem was at length taken by the imperial troops, and every building razed to the ground. The city Bither, to which Barcochab had retreated, was besieged and taken, and the impostor slain, on the same day of the year which had witnessed the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and, in more recent times, by Titus. Five hundred and eighty thousand Jews perished in this war, besides those who died by famine, pestilence, and fire. The Rabbis, under the influence of Akiba, the most eminent of their number, had taken an active part in the insurrection; but not against them alone was the vengeance of the conqueror directed. Thousands were sold into bondage; laws were passed which appeared best suited to exterminate the Jewish customs and the Jewish name; and on the site of Jerusalem was erected a city, denominated by Hadrian, from his own name and that of the tutelary deity of Rome, *Ælia Capitolina*. The Jews were forbidden to enter, or even approach within a certain distance, the place once so sacred, now desecrated by the observance of heathen rites, and the sway of heathen tyrants. The Gentile Christians, though not subjected to similar harsh treatment, saw with mournful feelings, a temple erected

to Venus on the hill of Calvary, and a statue of Jupiter placed where the sepulchre of Jesus had been.

But that Providence, by which the Jewish race had been so long protected, still exerted its power to preserve them distinct, scattered though they were. That remarkable people were destined to afford, by their continued existence, an enduring miracle, proof not only of their own law, but of that better system, which, though it rose among them, they rejected. The Rabbinical court was recognised, and acquired in the course of years more power than it had ever before possessed. Its seat was Tiberias, where the presiding Rabbi, under the name of Nasi or prince of the Sanhedrin, or patriarch, exercised jurisdiction over his countrymen remaining in Palestine, or scattered through Europe, Africa, and Asia Minor. The authority conferred on this chief by national feeling, was permitted, if not formally recognised, by the imperial court. The most distinguished of these ecclesiastical sovereigns was Rabbi Jehuda Hakkadosh, or Judah the Holy, who flourished about the middle of the second century. Under his direction, the traditions illustrative of the law, which had been received from the teachers of many successive ages, were collected into a code,

under the name of Mishna. To the development and illustration of this work, the labors of succeeding Rabbis were devoted.

While the Rabbinical court of Tiberias enjoyed its singularly constituted authority, there arose in the Parthian empire another Jewish chieftainship, more secular in its character, more splendid in its appearance, but more distinctly circumscribed in the powers which it exercised: The chiefs bore the title of Princes of the Captivity. The office was hereditary, and they who held it, claimed descent from the house of David. Under the Parthians, and under the Persian monarchy, which rose on the ruins of the Parthian, and subsequently under the caliphs, this eastern principedom continued to exist, to the eleventh century. The authority of the patriarchs of Tiberias ceased at a much earlier period, having declined from the accession of Constantine, till it was finally extinguished in the fifth century.

By the learned men connected with these two governments, were prepared two voluminous Gemaras, or Commentaries on the Mishna of Rabbi Judah. These Gemaras, with the Mishna itself, form the Talmuds. The Babylonian Talmud, consisting of the Mishna and the comments of the oriental Jews, has always been regarded as the great

work of modern Hebrew literature. Its preparation occupied the pupils of Rabbi Asche for thirty years, and the result was a work, alike remarkable for the wisdom occasionally displayed, and for the absurd and monstrous folly elsewhere exhibited.

Since the fall of these, their last remnants of organization, the Jews have been scattered over the earth, strangers in every land, and frequently subject to persecutions, which, if they have fulfilled the prophecies, have even more obviously borne witness to the limited influence of Christian feeling among those who have professed the Christian name. Let us hope that, at least in this country, the time is fast approaching, when the Jew, freed from the persecution of prejudice, as he is by the nature of our institutions from the grosser forms of intolerance, will exhibit in more prosperous circumstances, the noble qualities which once distinguished the occupants of the Holy Land, and which have been displayed in a faithful adherence to supposed truth, through centuries of suffering. Then may we hope that Christian light may find its way to the minds of those who have so long excluded it, when Christians themselves shall exhibit the spirit of Christian charity.

But we turn from this long suffering and de

voted race, to the land which their history has rendered so illustrious. Three centuries had elapsed from the time of Christ, when his religion was elevated with Constantine to the imperial throne. Ælia, again known as Jerusalem, was enriched with costly gifts by Constantine, and his mother the empress Helena. The latter especially adorned with magnificent structures the places to which the events of our Saviour's life had imparted a holy interest ; and it is to the monuments of her piety that the devout pilgrim appeals for evidence to identify the localities of many important transactions. The empire passed from the family of Constantine into the hands of Julian, a Pagan, though a wise and just prince. Influenced by opposition to Christianity, the emperor resolved to rebuild for the Jews their national temple. But his workmen, when they engaged in preparing the foundations for the edifice, were interrupted by the bursting forth of flames, and explosions so remarkable in their character as to suspend the progress of the work ; and the death of Julian, which soon took place, prevented it from being ever resumed. The incident has long been regarded by many as miraculous, by others as fabulous. But it is well authenticated by contemporary writers ; and, as has been recently shown by

Dr. Milman, in his History of the Jews, is susceptible of explanation on natural principles. Extensive caverns are known to have existed under the temple. The air in these caverns had probably become charged with that inflammable gas, which frequently has produced terrific explosions when mines or pits, long closed, have been incautiously entered. Such an explosion taking place in this instance was readily regarded as miraculous by the Christians, while even the Jews and heathens, uninformed of the natural agencies concerned in the incident, beheld it with superstitious awe.

The death of Julian terminated forever the ascendancy of heathenism in the Roman world; and for two hundred and seventy-four years, from that period, Palestine formed a portion of the Christian empire of Constantinople. Some disturbances which arose in the reigns of Zeno, Justin, and Justinian, with an invasion of the Persians under Chosroes II., while the tyrant Phocas held the imperial throne, are the only events of peculiar importance in its history during this period. The Persians possessed themselves of Jerusalem, and there the Jews, who had united with the invaders, took a fearful revenge for the oppression they had experienced, burning the

sumptuous churches, and putting the Christians to the sword. But the Persians were soon expelled by the arms of the emperor Herâclius, and the Christian temples were rebuilt, soon to fall before a more irresistible conqueror.

That conqueror came from Arabia. Mohammed had there, in the year of Christ 622, laid the foundation of his military and spiritual empire; and fifteen years after, Omar, the second of his successors, entered Jerusalem in triumph. A mosque, bearing the name of the victorious caliph, was erected where the temple of Solomon had stood. Egypt, Persia, many provinces of the Greek empire in Asia and Africa, fell before the warriors of the desert. Before one century had elapsed from the era of Mohammed's flight to Mecca, his victorious disciples on the one side threatened the very existence of the enfeebled eastern empire, and on the other, having conquered Spain, were preparing for the invasion of France.

From the seventh to the eleventh century we find little to interest us in the history of Palestine. The mighty empire of which it now formed a part, after passing under the government of the successive caliphs, Omar, Othman, and Ali, was established in the family of Ommiyah. The Ommiyade caliphs fixed their residence at Da-

musculus; but their power gradually declined before that of the descendants of Abbas, the uncle of Mohammed. At length, in the year 750, a decisive battle on the banks of the Nile transferred the caliphate to the Abbasside dynasty. Palestine shared but remotely in the splendor of this illustrious family; the seat of their power was Bagdad, founded by the caliph Almansor on the banks of the Tigris, where in the magnificence of Haroun Al-Raschid, and the literary and scientific spirit of his son Al-Mamoun, appeared the golden age of the Mohammedan faith.

But another dynasty arose in Africa, descended from Fatema, daughter of Mohammed and wife of Ali. About the year 970, Moez-ladin-Allah established his dominion over all the northern coast of Africa, founded Cairo, and gained possession of Syria and Palestine. The sway of the Fate-mite or Egyptian caliphs continued over the Holy Land for about a hundred years.

Hitherto, with slight interruptions, Palestine had always been accessible to the devotion of Christian pilgrims from the west, who came in great numbers to visit the land which had been the birth-place of their religion; and under the caliphs, Christians appear to have constituted no small portion of its population. But during the

eleventh century, a revolution in the east attracted thither the attention of Europe, and called on the Christian powers to arm for the defence of their Asiatic brethren. The Turks, originally a pastoral tribe inhabiting the regions around the northern part of the Caspian Sea, had gradually acquired strength by encroachments on the power of the Abbasside caliphs of Bagdad. At length they became masters of Persia, and of the east; and, under their princes of the house of Seljook, threatened the Greek empire, and conquered Palestine from the Fatemites. The Christian pilgrims and inhabitants of the Holy Land experienced various abuses from the barbarian invaders, and Alexius Comnenus sent from Constantinople to the princes of Europe, urgent requests for assistance against the horde by whom his empire was placed in jeopardy.

Europe arose at the call of the clergy. Enthusiasm spread through all ranks. The western nations had not yet lost that wild, barbarian spirit of enterprise which led their fathers from the north to occupy the cultivated regions of France, Italy, and Spain; and with that spirit was blended a zeal for their religion, fervent but not enlightened, and which sought to do honor to the Saviour by destroying his enemies, unmindful

how different was the principle which he pursued while on earth. While such was the military and religious enthusiasm which animated the mass, there were among their leaders some who had more extensive views. They saw with how few exceptions, through Africa and Asia, civilization no less than Christianity, had disappeared before the arms of the Mohammedans. They saw a new, and still more barbarous empire rapidly extending in the east, while in the west the Moorish dominion still existed over a large portion of Spain. Shall we charge those politicians with narrow or superstitious views, who first conceived the design of uniting all Christian Europe in one great league to defend religion, liberty, and civilization against the power which in every direction pressed on, threatening ultimately to overthrow them all?

The first Crusade, so called from the *cross* worn by each soldier as an emblem of the cause he had embraced, was resolved on in the councils of Placentia and Clermont. A straggling army of three hundred thousand men, commanded by Peter the Hermit, and Walter the Moneyless, passed through Hungary, pillaging as they went. They were cut off partly by the Christian inhabitants whom their conduct drove to resistance, and partly by the Turks in Asia. The great army

of confederated Europe followed, led by Godfrey, duke of Bouillon, Robert, duke of Normandy, eldest son of William the Conqueror, Hugh, brother to the king of France, and other princes. The fears of the Emperor Alexius took a different direction; when he saw an army of six hundred thousand rude warriors before the walls of Constantinople; he expedited, as much as possible; their passage to the Holy Land. Jerusalem had meantime been recovered from the Turks by the lieutenant of the Fatemite Caliph; but the Christians had come too far to abandon their expedition. In 1199, Jerusalem was taken by storm. Seventy thousand of its inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, were massacred. The authority of king was conferred on Godfrey of Bouillon. He refused to bear the royal title, in the city of Him who had been crowned with thorns. His conduct was noble; it would have been nobler, had he, by restraining the violence of the soldiers, imitated the mildness of the Saviour whom he honored. Godfrey exercised his government as defender of the Holy Sepulchre. The title of king of Jerusalem was borne for eighty-eight years by his successors, Baldwin I. and II.; Foulques, Baldwin III., Amaury, Baldwin IV. and V., and Guy de Lusignan. Their kingdom

was formed on the feudal model, then prevalent throughout Europe, the common people holding their lands each under the control of some minor baron, beneath whose banner he was bound to fight, — while the minor barons were subject in a similar manner to the command of the dukes, counts, and greater barons, and the chief nobility sustained the same relation to the king.

In 1147, a second Crusade was undertaken by Louis VII. of France, and Conrad III. of Germany, to recover some places which the first crusaders had conquered beyond the limits of Palestine, and of which the Turks had regained possession. Great ravages were committed, thousands of lives lost, and nothing gained by this ill-conducted expedition.

In the latter part of the twelfth century, terminated the feeble dynasty of the Fatemite caliphs in Egypt. Saladin, who had commanded in that country the forces of a Seljook prince, Nouredin Mohammed, placed himself on the throne. Having conquered Syria from the family of Nouredin, he turned his arms against the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem. Guy of Lusignan was, by the treachery of the Count of Tripoli, vanquished and taken prisoner in battle; and Jerusalem surren-

dered after a siege of fourteen days on terms honorable to the clemency of the victor.

The sudden overthrow of the Christian kingdom of Judea excited the chivalrous feelings of Europe to a third crusade. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa led the way in 1189. On his passage, he defeated the Greek emperor, Isaac Angelus, who had harassed his troops. After several times defeating the Turks, he died in consequence of bathing imprudently, while heated, in a stream of Asia Minor. An army of a hundred thousand men was at the same time in progress toward the east, led by Richard Cœur-de-Lion of England, Philip Augustus of France, and many other princes. This expedition was conducted by sea. Richard, on his way, deposed the tyrannical king of Cyprus, and sold the island to Guy of Lusignan, the ex-king of Jerusalem. Acre was taken by the crusaders. A battle took place between that city and Ascalon, in which Richard was victorious. The valor and generous spirit of the leaders on both sides have rendered this crusade a favorite theme of poetry and romance. Little, however, was permanently gained by the Christians. Discord arose among their chiefs, and shortly after the siege of Acre, Philip abandoned the enterprise. A truce on equitable

terms, was concluded with Saladin, and the gallant Richard returned, — to become the inmate of a prison, being seized by Leopold, duke of Austria, in base revenge for a quarrel which had occurred in Palestine. Saladin died in 1198, and his children were deprived of their inheritance by their uncle, Malek el-Adel.

The fourth Crusade, ten years after, never reached the Holy Land ; its chiefs found a more valuable prize in the Greek empire, where their ally, Alexius IV., had been murdered by his cousin Murzuphlus. They took Constantinople, and placed Baldwin, count of Flanders, on the throne of the Cæsars.

Of the fifth Crusade, conducted in 1216 by Andrew II. king of Hungary, a part, who sailed from ports on the Atlantic, were driven by a storm to Lisbon, where the king, Sancho I., persuaded them to remain and assist him against the Moors. Having rendered him victorious, they continued their course, and joined the main army in Palestine. The combined force determined to attack the city of Damietta in Egypt. They took the city, but were subsequently obliged to relinquish it, and to return.

In 1228, the Emperor Frederick II. sailed to the east, and concluded an advantageous treaty

with the sultan of Egypt, who ceded to him Jerusalem and many towns in Palestine. But before twenty years had elapsed, a new incursion of barbarians, Khowaresmians, flying before the Mongols, overran the Holy Land. Louis IX. of France, undertook a new crusade. This monarch by his many virtues merited the title of Saint, which was at first conferred on him in consequence of his only defect—superstition. He was defeated and taken prisoner near Damietta.

In 1270, he again embarked on a similar expedition, and died of a fever, while besieging Tunis. The last attempt to reconquer Palestine was made by Prince Edward of England, afterwards king under the title of Edward I. In 1291, Acre, the last point which the Christians had occupied, fell into the possession of the Egyptian sultan.

Shortly before this period the descendants of Saladin's brother, Melek el-Adel, had been dethroned in Egypt, and an entire control over the government assumed by the Mamelukes, or Circassian body-guard. This ascendancy they retained for two hundred and fifty years, nominating their monarchs from among their own officers, and deposing them at pleasure, as the prætorian guard had done in the feeblest days of the Roman

empire. Under the dominion of the Mameluke sultans of Egypt, Palestine long continued. The storm which burst on the south when Jenghis Khan and his Mongols issued from central Asia, was felt but transiently in Judea. The Mongols were defeated in 1260, and subsequently driven from Syria by the Egyptian sultans.

We have already seen the Turks, under princes of the house of Seljook, rushing irresistibly from their deserts to found an empire on the ruins of the eastern caliphate. Another branch of the same tribe appeared in the thirteenth century, under the command of Ortoghrul and his son Osman, from the latter of whom the national appellation of Osmanlis, or Ottomans, is derived. During three centuries they established, step by step, an empire embracing extensive dominions in Europe as well as in Asia. In 1453, they took Constantinople, and in 1516 the Mameluke sultanhip of Egypt was destroyed, and that country with Syria and Palestine became subject to Selim, sultan of Turkey. From that period till within a few months, the Holy Land has formed a portion of the Ottoman empire, to which indeed it still nominally belongs.

During the wars which resulted from the French Revolution, the attention of the world was for a

time attracted to Palestine, by the presence there of that mighty genius, who, himself the child of the Revolution, inherited its strength, its brilliancy, and its transientness. Bonaparte, at that period in the service of the Directory, had subdued lower Egypt; and, meditating the conquest of the entire east, marched, in the spring of 1799, through the Idumæan desert into Palestine. Jaffa was subdued, and the fame of the conqueror stained by the slaughter of twelve hundred prisoners, an act which, though dictated by policy, and possibly consistent with usages which modern warfare has generally relinquished, can never be regarded by unprejudiced thinkers, with other feelings than those of detestation. Advancing on Acre, the French were bravely repelled by the combined forces of the English under Sir Sidney Smith, and the Turks under Achmet Pasha, surnamed from his cruelty, *Djezzar*, or the butcher. On the plain of Esdraelon, where armies of so many different nations had encamped or fought, the Turks were defeated by Bonaparte, Kleber, and Murat; but the repulse from Acre induced the commander to return to Egypt.

Within the past summer, [1833], a revolution has taken place in the government of Palestine, which may be attended with important advan-

tages. While the Turkish empire, which had long exhibited marks of increasing weakness, was exhausted by the revolt of Greece, and subsequently by a Russian war, its vassal, Mohammed Ali, pasha of Egypt, had acquired strength which rendered him an overmatch for the power of the sultan. A war arose. Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali, advanced towards Constantinople. The intervention of the great European powers preserved from entire subversion the throne of the Ottomans; but the victorious Pasha, though still nominally subject to the Grand Seignior, has become possessed of Palestine and Syria. Mohammed Ali, though by some charged with a tyrannical disposition, is an able and enlightened sovereign; aware of the advantages which Europeans possess by their civilization, and anxious to acquire the same for himself and his subjects. Under the government of his family, it may be hoped that a better age is now dawning on Palestine; that the Holy Land may yet rise from the condition of a harassed and thinly inhabited province to the enjoyment of those blessings with which Providence has so richly endowed it.

That the Jews will finally be restored to Palestine, is believed not only by themselves, but by numbers, perhaps the majority, among Christians.

If ever an equitable system of government should be established there, it cannot be doubted that numbers of devout Jews will be induced to establish themselves in the land of their fathers; but that the ancient civil and religious institutions will be revived, the temple rebuilt, and its ritual services resumed, under the government of a Jewish king or sanhedrim, is consistent neither with what we understand of the Divine plans as manifested in Scripture, with the condition of the Jews, nor with the present state of the human mind. Nor does it appear probable that Palestine will ever again be a separate kingdom. It would be too small to maintain an independent existence, as the world is now constituted. The happiest fate perhaps which can be anticipated for it is, that it should share in the gradual advancement, physical and intellectual, of the rising Egyptian empire, till that advancement leads, under the blessing of Heaven, to the reception of Christianity.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGION, THE SANCTUARY, AND ITS ATTENDANTS.

"—— Then in awful state
 The Temple reared its everlasting gate.
 No workman steel, no ponderous axes rung;
 Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung.
 Majestic silence! — Then the harp awoke,
 The cymbal clanged, the deep-voiced trumpet spoke;
 And Salem spread her suppliant arms abroad,
 Viewed the descending flame, and blessed the present God!"

Heber.

THE knowledge of the one true God and of his nature and will, which had been communicated by revelation to the first parents of mankind, became generally lost among their descendants, till at length it existed in its purity only in the Hebrew race. Among them it was preserved by the special interposition of God, that it might, in the fulness of time, be restored to the world at large.

The immediate ancestors of Abraham in Chaldaea appear to have shared in the corruption preva-

lent around them; but that patriarch was supernaturally called to remove thence, and establish himself in the land which his descendants were finally to inhabit. He and his offspring built altars wherever they dwelt; and continued to observe, by sacrifice, prayer, and the appointed rite of circumcision, the covenant which had been instituted between God and themselves. But it was not till their posterity, after the captivity in Egypt, were preparing by their sojourn in the desert to occupy the Land of Promise, that their religious system received its completion, by the regulations instituted by Moses, under the authority and with the sanction of the Most High.

The leading principle of the Mosaic religion is the Unity of God, as opposed to the fictions of all who believed in numerous deities, limiting each other in power, and sharing the weaknesses of humanity. This grand truth of the Divine Unity, involves in itself all else that is most important in the ideas conveyed to us by the law of Moses with regard to the nature and character of God. If there be but one Supreme Ruler, he must be infinite and eternal. That he is all-wise follows necessarily from these attributes; and a being who is perfect in wisdom must also be perfect in goodness. To preserve, then, in the world the

great truth that God is One, was to preserve the truths that He is infinite, eternal, wise, and good. For this object were the descendants of Abraham set apart, and for this the whole Mosaic system was instituted.

That this great purpose might be accomplished, it was necessary that the nation which was constituted the depository of the truth, should be preserved as far as possible from the injurious influences of neighbouring idolatrous tribes. A people worshipping the true God, while all around them worshipped idols, were of necessity peculiar ; but the peculiarity of their doctrine would soon be lost, were it not connected with corresponding peculiarities in their customs of public and of private life. On this account it was that the Divine Lawgiver, who through Moses conferred on the Israelites their religious and civil institutions, incorporated these so closely with each other, and rendered them so distinct in character from those of other nations.

Yet the effort to render the customs of the Hebrews peculiar, was not carried to that excess which mere human policy might have prompted. The Israelites, just returning from Egypt, with all the ignorance and degradation produced by their long servitude, needed religious services re-

sembling in some degree those to which they had been previously accustomed, and would more readily conform to a civil and religious system, bearing some analogy to the Egyptian. Their new constitution was admirably adapted to their wants and to their frailties. Their tabernacle was formed on the model of the Egyptian temples, but it contained not, like them, a statue or emblem of the Deity to whom it was consecrated. Their priests, like those of Egypt, formed a distinct class, the hereditary guardians of national learning, and the only aristocracy which appears to have exercised an important influence upon public affairs. But they had no mysterious secrets veiled from general sight, and to which they alone enjoyed access. The custom of offering sacrifices was retained, as observed among all the surrounding nations; but animals were sacrificed which the Egyptians adored as divine, and numerous are the instances in the books of Moses, where customs, innocent in themselves, are forbidden, because they had become connected with offerings made to idols.

To attain the grand object for which the Hebrew nation had been set apart, their civil and religious constitutions were identified. Their God was their king, and their religious code was

likewise their code of civil and criminal law. The Supreme Being was the king of Israel in a more literal sense than a cursory view of their history would suggest. Even when human sovereigns were appointed to rule over the people, they were regarded, in a stricter sense than other monarchs, as holding but a delegated power; they were rewarded or punished according to their faithfulness to the King of Kings, or their desertion of his service. The dealings of Providence, which in other nations have been often indistinctly discernible, were marked with a clearness which established the fact, that prince and people were alike subject to the immediate government of the Heavenly Sovereign. Idolatry was constantly punished by defeat and misery; and national obedience as constantly rewarded by national blessings.

As the Supreme Being was thus the King of the nation, idolatry became more than a mere departure from the truth. It was a political crime. It was treason; and treason of the most fatal kind, for its tendency was to overthrow the foundations of national happiness and national existence. It was the first duty of every Israelite, not merely as a good man, but as a good citizen, to honor the Almighty Ruler of his nation. And that all

might be kept in mind of this peculiar connexion, the Heavenly Monarch condescended to adopt the custom of earthly kings, and though his presence filled immensity, to designate as his own peculiar home among his subjects, a spot which should be the capital of the Jewish empire. This spot was the only one which the law permitted to be consecrated for purposes of sacrifice. Houses might be built for prayer, and altars raised to commemorate remarkable events; but in no other place than that "which the Lord had chosen to put his name there," and on no altar but that which stood within his consecrated courts, could sacrifice be offered to the Supreme, without a violation of his law. This regulation probably afforded a more efficient safeguard against idolatry than any other which could have been introduced. Had it been lawful to the Jews, according to the custom of other nations, to erect altars and temples generally throughout the land, many of the shrines first dedicated to Jehovah, would have gradually admitted the entrance of idol rites; but so long as this imperative law was observed, unless idolatry penetrated that one sanctuary which the whole nation guarded, it could gain no access to the land of Israel. It was to the neglect of this salutary restriction, by the employment for sacred

worship, of those "high places," which had been held sacred by the ancient Canaanites, that idolatry owed its first introduction.

Instances however are recorded of departure from this salutary law, as well as from that which confined to the priests of the tribe of Levi, the right of officiating at sacrifices; and in some cases the proceeding received an express miraculous sanction. Gideon, of the tribe of Manasseh, by divine command, erected an altar and offered sacrifice in Ophrah.* In the early part of Solomon's reign, the "high places" which had anciently been regarded as sacred were still in use, and Solomon himself offered a thousand burnt offerings at Gibeon, "for that was the great high place;" yet on this occasion he was favored with that remarkable dream, in which the wisdom which he sought was granted, and long life and riches added, which he had not asked.† The prophet Elijah erected an altar and offered sacrifices on Mount Carmel, while the appointed sanctuary was at Jerusalem; and the acceptance of the offering was proved by fire from heaven, which descended on the altar. The cases of Gideon and Elijah may be regarded as exceptions to the

* Judges, vi. 25-28.

† 1 Kings, iii. 2-15.

general law, permitted for the important purpose of vindicating the true worship against that of heathen gods. The offering of Solomon was rendered with sincere piety, and sanctioned by the universal though incorrect practice of the time : it therefore received the benignant acceptance of the Being to whom it was presented.

Among the later descendants of the Hebrews, two edifices were erected for the performance of sacrifices, besides the sanctuary at Jerusalem. The temple on Mount Gerizim, held sacred by the Samaritans, is said to have been erected by their chief, Sanballat, who constituted his son-in-law, Manasseh, its first high priest. Manasseh was the grandson of the Jewish high priest, but had been excluded from the priesthood and the city by Nehemiah, on account of his marriage with the daughter of Sanballat. A bitter division of feeling thus arose between the Jews and the Samaritans, of which we meet frequent notices in the history of our Saviour. It was the prevalence of this national antipathy which caused the surprise of the Samaritan woman, when Jesus addressed her by the well of Sychar ; and a reference to the same hostile feeling gives force to the beautiful parable, in which Jesus relates that one who had fallen among thieves, and had been pas-

sed unnoticed by a Levite and a priest of his own nation, was relieved at length by the kindness of a Samaritan.

About a hundred and fifty years before Christ, a temple to Jehovah was erected at Leontopolis in Egypt, by Onias, with the consent of king Ptolemy Philometer. Onias was lawful heir to the high priesthood, being the son of Onias III., who had been deposed and murdered under Antiochus Epiphanes. When the yoke of that tyrant had been shaken off, the high priesthood was conferred on the conquering Maccabean family. Onias, who had in his infancy been carried into Egypt, considered himself justified in establishing a temple there, by the prophecy of Isaiah, xix. 18, 19.* The services of this temple, called, from its founder, Onion, continued to be performed,

* This passage is thus rendered in Noyes's version of Isaiah :

“In that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt
Speaking the language of Canaan,
And swearing by Jehovah of Hosts ;
One of them shall be called the City of Deliverance.
In that day shall there be an altar to Jehovah in the midst
of the land of Egypt,
And in the border of it a pillar to Jehovah.”

The common version, following the received Hebrew text, calls the city that of Destruction. It is singular that

until it was closed by Vespasian after the overthrow of that at Jerusalem.

The one authorized sanctuary of God in Israel was originally a tabernacle or tent. No edifice of a more substantial kind could have been erected during the long period from the giving of the law to the establishment of the nation in Palestine. The Tabernacle was however of splendor suited to its high purpose, as the palace of the king, and the holy place of the God of Israel. It was thirty cubits in length, ten in breadth, and ten in height; — the cubit being a foot and nine or ten inches. It was built with boards of shittim or acacia wood. These boards were forty-eight in number; — twenty on the north and south respectively, six on the west, and two at the corners, on the east. They were each a cubit and a half in breadth, and overlaid with gold; so that, placed close together, they formed a wall of gold to the rooms within, the entrance to the east alone being

the reading which Mr. Noyes has followed, and which is probably correct, admits not only the rendering, "City of Deliverance," but "City of the Sun," in Greek, Helio-polis, the very name of the district in which Onias built his temple. We cannot wonder that he regarded himself as fulfilling the prophecy.

open. The boards rested on bases of silver gilt, weighing each a talent ; they were connected by hooks at the top, and secured throughout by bars overlaid with gold. Five gilded columns adorned the entrance. Over the whole was spread, first a covering of linen, richly embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet ; next a fabric of goats' hair woven, which extended nearly to the ground ;—thirdly, one of rams' skins dyed red, or, as we should style it, red leather ;—and finally, a covering made from the skins of an animal called *tahash*, improperly rendered *badger* in our version, but most probably a species of seal which is found in the Red Sea. Over the entrance hung, on rods of silver, a curtain of similar fabric with those which formed the inmost covering of the tabernacle ; and a veil of the same kind was suspended across the building, probably about twenty cubits from the entrance, dividing it into two apartments. The curtains and veil, of fine twined linen, were embroidered with Cherubim,—emblematical figures, which appear to have combined the body of an ox, the wings of an eagle, and perhaps a human face.

The larger portion of the tabernacle, from the entrance to the veil, was called the "holy place." Within it, on the north side, was placed the Table

of shew-bread, two cubits in length, one in breadth, and one and a half in height, plated with gold. Twelve unleavened loaves were placed upon this table, and sprinkled over with frankincense. They were renewed every Sabbath. Opposite the table, on the south side of the holy place, stood the golden Candlestick, about five feet in height, and three and a half between its exterior branches. It supported seven lamps, of which three were kept burning during the day; at night all were lighted. Immediately before the curtain, which divided the holy place from the still more sacred portion beyond, was placed the Altar of Incense. It was of acacia wood overlaid with gold, a cubit in length and breadth, and two cubits high. Its upper surface, and that of the table of shew-bread, were encircled by a border of gold.

The smaller apartment of the tabernacle, separated from the holy place by the veil, was styled "the Holy of Holies"; and was regarded as the peculiar habitation of the Divine Presence. Here was placed the Ark of the Covenant. This was a box of acacia wood plated with gold, a cubit and a half in breadth and height, and two cubits long. Its cover was of solid gold, and received the name of Mercy-seat, propitiatory, or covering of expiation, from being annually sprinkled with the blood

of the victims on the day of the great fast. Upon this golden lid were placed two figures of Cherubim, with their faces toward each other, and their wings forming as it were a seat above. Hence the reference to the Supreme Being in Scripture, as "sitting between the cherubim." In the ark were deposited the two tables of stone, on which the ten commandments were inscribed. Near it was placed a golden vase of the manna, with which the Israelites had been sustained in the wilderness, the rod of Aaron which had miraculously budded, and a copy of the Law. The ark, the altar of incense, and the table of shew-bread, were provided with rings on their sides, through which staves covered with gold were inserted for the purpose of transporting them from place to place. When the tabernacle had been erected, and the table and altar placed in their designated positions, their staves were removed; but those attached to the ark of the covenant were left in the rings, and remained there even when the ark was permanently established in the temple at Jerusalem.

Around the tabernacle was a Court, a hundred cubits long and fifty broad, surrounded at intervals of five cubits by pillars, which sustained on rods of silver, the linen curtains that screened the sacred enclosure. The four central curtains on

the east end were richly embroidered, and were drawn up on occasion, to afford entrance. The tabernacle stood near the further or western extremity of this area; and between it and the entrance was the Altar of burnt-offerings, about eight feet long and broad, and five in height. It was hollow, made of acacia wood covered with brass, and furnished with a brazen grate at about half its height; on this grate the fire was kindled. The four corners of the altar projected above its sides, bearing the name of horns. The whole was furnished with rings in which bars might be inserted for its removal. Between the altar and the tabernacle was placed the brazen Laver, in which the priests washed their hands before engaging in their sacred offices. This was made from the ornaments and mirrors of polished brass offered by the women for the service of the sanctuary.

Such was the consecrated place of the God of Israel, as it continued to exist from its first erection to the period when Solomon replaced it with a permanent structure. But even this movable temple was such as to do justice in its splendor to the united wealth of the nation which had been employed in erecting it. The gold and silver alone, used in its construction, are estimated at

above eight hundred thousand dollars; and to this sum must be added the cost of other materials and of the workmanship, with the difference in the value of money between that age and the present.

The Temple of Solomon however far surpassed it, at least in costliness. The proportions of this edifice appear to us of the present day somewhat singular. The main building was sixty cubits long, twenty broad, and thirty high; before this was erected a porch, as it is styled, of the same breadth with the temple, ten cubits deep, and not less than a hundred and twenty (or two hundred feet) in height; — four times as high, consequently, as the building to which it formed the entrance, and twelve times as high as it was deep. Around the main building were placed three stories of chambers, extending seven cubits from its wall in each direction, but reaching only to half its height. The temple thus rose above its surrounding chambers, and the lofty porch above the temple itself, in proportions utterly at variance with all those rules of architecture which are now observed. But let it be remembered that very little is known to us of the peculiar characteristics of the Hebrew style. We have not the slightest hint of the manner in which the upper portion of the porch

was constructed, whether as tower or spire, whether rising in successive colonnades, or presenting through its vast height an unbroken front of white marble. We cannot judge Gothic architecture by the proportions of the Grecian style, nor condemn the Grecian because it varies from the Gothic. The Hebrew style may have exhibited a symmetry as peculiar to itself, as either of those with which we are familiar.

The interior of the temple was divided and arranged on the same general plan with the tabernacle. Folding-doors, plated with gold, opened from the porch into the holy place, forty cubits long, twenty broad, and thirty high, where stood the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread, and, instead of the single candlestick of seven branches, ten golden candlesticks, five towards the north, and five towards the south. Another door, of equal or superior richness, opened from the holy place into the holy of holies, a room of twenty cubits in height, breadth, and depth. Two cherubim of ten cubits in height, of wild-olive wood, covered with gold, extended their wings from the sides to the centre of the room, and beneath them rested the ark, its golden staves touching the richly embroidered veil which hung before the door. The utensils which had stood in the outer

court of the tabernacle, were replaced by others of far greater size and magnificence. Two large and costly pillars of brass stood before the entrance. They were called Jachin and Boaz, "stability and strength." The brazen altar was ten cubits high, and twenty in length and breadth, filled in with unhewn stones. In place of the single laver of the tabernacle, there was constructed a hemisphere of brass, ten cubits in diameter, and resting on twelve figures of oxen. Besides this "brazen sea," there were ten smaller lavers, resting on bases and wheels of brass, and placed five on either side of the court before the temple. This court, appropriated to the priests and their services, was surrounded by another, still more extensive, so that the temple and its enclosures covered the whole summit of Mount Moriah. Solomon and subsequent rulers of Jerusalem enlarged the plain on the top of this hill; walls of immense strength were built from the valley below to the height of from four to six hundred feet, and the interval between these stupendous ramparts and the natural sides of the hill was filled with earth.

On the capture of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, the temple was destroyed. It was rebuilt by Zerubbabel and his successors. Its dimensions appear to have been at this time greater, and its

treasures, in many years of peace, became immense, but the Ark of the Covenant was no longer there. A tower, called Baris was erected, by John Hyrcanus, at the north-western angle of the outer court. In the disastrous period which preceded the final triumph of Herod the Great, the temple suffered much. Repeatedly occupied as a citadel, it was repeatedly subjected to assault and capture. Herod rebuilt the whole with great magnificence, removing the ancient structure part by part, as the new one progressed, lest the people should suspect him of a design to destroy, rather than improve their venerated sanctuary. As rebuilt by Herod, the porch was a hundred cubits in breadth, and the same in height; the holy place twenty cubits broad, sixty long, and sixty high, while the holy of holies retained the same form and size as in the temple of Solomon, being twenty cubits in each dimension. A vine of solid gold, of the size of a man, was placed over the entrance to the holy place. On the roof were sharp spikes of gilded iron, to prevent the birds from alighting. The Court of the priests, immediately before the sanctuary, enclosed the brazen altar, still larger than that in the temple of Solomon, being fifty cubits square by fifteen in height. Beyond this, lay successively the courts

of the Israelites, of the women, and of the Gentiles, separated from each other and adorned with parapets, cloisters, and porches. Many gates of rich construction afforded communication from without, or between the various courts. The largest of these was that called Beautiful, on the eastern side of the outer wall, and to which the ascent was from the valley of Kidron. It was a hundred cubits high, and adorned with Corinthian brass, a compound metal in high estimation among the ancients. Here it was that Peter and John cured a lame man. Immediately within this gate, was Solomon's porch, a covered piazza, its roof supported by three rows of Corinthian columns, and extending the whole length of the eastern wall. Similar piazzas surrounded the enclosure on the northern and western sides; and to the south the rows of columns were four in number. The centre of the southern porch was a hundred cubits in height, and standing on the verge of a precipice four hundred cubits deep, presented an elevation from which the spectator could scarcely look down without dizziness. This was probably the "pinnacle of the temple," from which our Saviour was tempted to cast himself. The city lay chiefly west and south of Mount Moriah, so that his fall from so elevated a point, and his miraculous pre-

servation, had he reached the ground unhurt, would have been witnessed by thousands.

It was from the court of the Gentiles and its surrounding porches that Jesus drove the money changers, and those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves.* This kind of traffic appears to have been permitted for the convenience of those who wished to procure animals for sacrifice, or to exchange the current coin, bearing the impress of the Roman emperor, for the national shekels and half shekels, which alone could be received into the sacred treasury. But such occupations were inconsistent with the character of the building, nor is it probable that those engaged in them confined their traffic to the objects for which alone it had been permitted. Jesus, in removing them, was supported by the feelings of every pious Jew to whom the act was known.

The tower which had formerly been called Baris, was rebuilt with great strength by Herod, and named Antonia, in honor of Mark Antony. It stood on the north-west angle of the court of the Gentiles; and was elevated so as to command the temple itself. A covered stairway communicated between them. Under the Roman govern-

* Matt., xxi. 12; Mark, xi. 15; John, ii. 14.

ment, a guard of one cohort was placed in Antonia, to preserve subjection in the temple. By this guard St. Paul was taken, when an uproar was excited in the court of the Gentiles by his presence; and from the entrance of the stairway, leading to the tower, he addressed the multitude.*

Having described the Tabernacle, and the structures which succeeded it as the [sanctuary of Jehovah in Israel, we proceed to investigate the religious constitution of which its services formed, as it were, the central point.

On occasion of the last and most fearful of the plagues, inflicted on the Egyptians and their rebellious king, — the destruction of the first-born, — it was made known to the people of Israel that they were to regard every first-born male child among them as sacred to the Lord, in memory of their great deliverance. The same law extended to the first-born of all cattle, if males, which were regarded as sacred to religious purposes. The first-born of men were afterwards redeemed by the substitution of the tribe of Levi, who were thus constituted the peculiar servants of the Most High. The appointment of Aaron to the high priesthood had already taken place. The tribe of Levi con-

* Acts, xxi. 28 - 40.

sisted of three families, the descendants respectively of Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. To the family of Kohath belonged Moses and Aaron; but to Aaron and his descendants alone the dignity of the priesthood was confined. The children of Moses inherited no distinction above the other Levites, and his race soon passes into obscurity. Not so the descendants of Aaron. Of his four sons, two indeed, Nadab and Abihu, were miraculously punished with death for a neglect of the rules of their order, having burnt before the Lord "strange fire," or fire not kindled from that which was always kept burning in the sanctuary. It is probable that their error was occasioned by intoxication, as the command was immediately afterwards issued, that the priests should abstain from wine and strong drink, when about to engage in their sacred services. But from Eleazar and Ithamar, the surviving sons of Aaron, sprung the succession, not of the high priests alone, but of all who bore the name of priests, as distinguished from the common Levites. The office of high priest was at first hereditary in the family of Eleazar, but we find it at length held by Eli, a descendant of Ithamar. For the crimes of Eli's sons, divine vengeance was denounced against them, and nearly the whole race were destroyed

by Saul, at Nob, for the support they had rendered to David. Abiathar, who escaped the massacre, shared with Zadok his ancestral dignity during the reign of David; but with this exception the high priesthood was transferred to the line of Eleazar. After the successful revolt against the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, the priestly and royal office became united in the Asmonean family, who were descended from Eleazar. Herod exercised the power of appointing and removing the high priest at pleasure. In several instances similar power was granted by the Romans to various princes of the Herodian family.

Mention is made in the book of Jeremiah, of an officer under the name of Second Priest, who probably acted as substitute for the high priest on important occasions when the latter could not be present. Such an office is spoken of by later Jewish writers, under the name of Sagan, or deputy.

The high priest was assisted in his office by the other priests, descendants of Aaron, and by the Levites. The priests were arranged by David in twenty-four courses, who officiated by weeks in turn. The Levites were organized in a similar manner, twenty-four thousand of them being appointed as assistants to the priests, four thou-

sand as porters, four thousand as musicians, and six thousand as judges and genealogists.

The dress of the priests, when officiating, consisted of linen or cotton drawers and tunic, with a long and broad girdle or sash, and a high-pointed turban, called the mitre. The high priest wore also some ornaments peculiar to his office. Over a robe of blue, with a border composed alternately of golden bells, and pomegranates of purple and scarlet, was placed the Ephod, consisting of two parts, one covering the breast, and one the back, united at the shoulders, and, in later times at least, furnished with sleeves. The ephod of the high priest was richly dyed, and ornamented upon the shoulders with onyx stones, on which the names of the twelve tribes were engraved. Over the ephod was placed the breast plate, about ten inches square, and furnished with four rows of precious stones, on which the names of the tribes were engraven. It contained a pouch in which were the Urim and Thummim. These names, which may be well translated Light and Truth, are supposed to have indicated a portion of the sacred attire, by which the high priest was enabled to ascertain the will of God on important subjects. It probably consisted of three lots, one affirmative, one negative, and the third indeterminate. The

mitre of the high priest was higher and richer than those of his inferior brethren, and bore on its front a plate of gold, on which were inscribed the words "Holiness to the Lord." The Maccabean family, who combined the offices of priest and prince, added to the mitre a triple crown.

In the time of the younger Agrippa, those Levites who formed the choir for the temple service, obtained from that prince the privilege of a habit like that of the officiating priests. The other Levites remained undistinguished by dress from their countrymen at large.

CHAPTER IX.

SACRED ANTIQUITIES, CONTINUED.

“Where art thou, Mighty Presence! that of yore
Wert wont between the cherubim to rest,
Velled in a cloud of glory, shadowing o’er
Thy sanctuary, the chosen and the blest?
Thou, that didst make fair Sion’s ark thy throne,
And call the oracle’s recess thine own!”

Mrs. Hemans.

To excite in the minds of a people, hitherto uncivilized, a sense of the divine greatness, Moses had bestowed on the construction of the tabernacle, all the magnificence, which the united wealth and industry at his disposal could create. The services which were performed in that sanctuary, were in proportion costly and imposing. On the morning and evening of every day, a lamb was offered on the brazen altar: an oblation of oil, wine, and flour, accompanied the sacrifice. On the Sabbath, the offering was doubled. On

every new moon, besides the ordinary sacrifices of the day, two bullocks, a ram, and seven sheep were slain, with a goat as a sin-offering; and on the new moon of Tisri, or October, the beginning of the civil year, the number of victims was increased. The recurrence of the new moons was announced by the blowing of the silver trumpets. But all these services yielded in splendor to those of the great national festivals. Of these, the *Passover* ranks as most important. It was observed from the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the month Abib, which included parts of our March and April. It was instituted in memory of the signal deliverance of the Hebrews from the power of the Egyptians, and especially of that fearful night when all the first-born of Egypt perished while those of the Israelites were preserved. On the fourteenth of every month, all leaven and leavened bread was removed from the houses, and for a week after none was used. On the same day, the fourteenth, the master of every family brought a lamb to the temple, where it was slain, and its blood sprinkled at the foot of the altar. This lamb, roasted whole, composed the paschal supper, which was eaten with wild and bitter herbs. At its first institution in Egypt, the feast was shared in haste, the company standing,

and prepared in every respect to undertake a long journey. But in later times, they reclined as at ordinary meals, and the only memorial of their former haste was the scrupulous observance of the command, not to break the bones of the animal. The whole family circle partook, several times, of bread and wine, and at intervals sung hymns of praise, many of the psalms being evidently prepared for these occasions. Traces may be observed, in the account of our Lord's last supper with his disciples, of those rites whose memory has been perpetuated by Jewish tradition. In passing round among his disciples the bread and wine, our Saviour consecrated with a new and more important meaning, a customary portion of the services in which they were then engaged.

Some doubt has arisen, whether, when he instituted the ordinance of the supper, our Lord observed the passover on the customary day, or at a period somewhat earlier. The Pharisees, we are told, would not enter into Pilate's judgment hall, "lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover," * of which Jesus had partaken the night before. It is highly improbable that the priests, whose office it was to super-

* John, xviii. 28.

intend the preparation of the lambs for the paschal supper, would have sanctioned any difference in the time of observing the rite; the language of the Evangelists implies that our Lord and his followers observed it at the customary time; — and the scruple of the Pharisees related probably to nothing more than the general sanctity of the season, and the solemn feasts which were continued through the subsequent seven days. They would have thought themselves defiled and unfitted for partaking in those feasts by entering a heathen judgment hall, though they scrupled not to force from a heathen judge the execution of an innocent man, whom prejudice alone prevented them from recognising as their king and their Saviour.

On all the seven days, following the fourteenth of Abib, sacrifices were offered in the temple, beyond those which were ordinarily required. On the fifteenth, a sheaf of barley was presented in the sanctuary, as the first fruits of the season; and the twenty-first was a feast of peculiar solemnity. On the first and last days of the festival, no servile labor was allowed.

Fifty days inclusive from the second day of the passover, occurred the feast of *Pentecost*, deriving that name from a Greek word, signifying fiftieth. It was also called the Feast of Weeks, from the seven

weeks which intervened after the passover ; and the Feast of Harvest, or of first fruits, as on this occasion loaves were presented, the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Many sacrifices were offered on this occasion, but the festival continued only for one day.

The feast of *Tabernacles* commenced on the fifteenth of Tisri, a month embracing parts of September and October, and continued eight days. Of these the last was chiefly distinguished. During this festival, the people dwelt in booths formed of the branches of trees, in memory of the encampment of their ancestors in the desert. It was the most joyful of the national observances, and besides its connexion with the ancient history of their race, was a season of thanksgiving for the blessings of fruits and of the vintage. It was celebrated with more sacrifices than the other festivals, and according to later Jewish tradition, with some peculiar rites. A species of sacred dance was performed by the chief men of the nation in the women's court of the temple, which the females witnessed from the latticed apartments near. Processions of men bearing citrons, and branches of palm, willow, and myrtle, circled the altar with shouts of hosanna. The priests too, every day of the feast, brought with songs and rejoicing, a quantity of water from the pool of

Siloam, and poured it to the south-west of the altar. The ceremony was probably typical of rain, one of the blessings of the fruitful season, for which thanksgivings were now rendered. It was probably in view of this solemnity "on the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." *

At these three great festivals, all males among the Jews were required by the law to be present in Jerusalem. That this law was very far from being strictly observed, we may gather from many facts mentioned in history, and from the very nature of the case. It would appear that for long periods under the kings, the festival services were entirely neglected; for they were instituted anew by Hezekiah, and again by Josiah. In later times, attendance on the festivals was probably regarded as a duty, incumbent on all whose circumstances permitted its convenient performance.

Such were the festivals instituted by Moses. Two others were subsequently adopted. The feast of *Purim* or lots, on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar, or March, was instituted in memory of the deliverance recorded

* John, vii. 37.

in the book of Esther. Its name was adopted from the lots which Haman cast to ascertain the proper time for the execution of his designs.* Its observance was sometimes accompanied by great excesses. Feelings of revenge were indulged, and mirth too often carried beyond the bounds of temperance. From these causes, there were those in the nation, who opposed its observance.

The Feast of the *Dedication*, commemorated the restoration of the services under the Maccabees, after their sacrilegious interruption by Antiochus. It commenced on the twenty-fifth of Kisleu or December, and continued to be observed eight days with illuminations and general rejoicings. From the illuminations it was frequently called the feast of lights.

The law of Moses appointed but a single fast, the *day of propitiation*, the tenth day of Tisri, and consequently five days before the feast of tabernacles. The ceremonies on this occasion were peculiar, and were conducted by the high priest in person. He first led forth a bullock, to be offered for the sins of himself and family; then, two goats, as offerings for the sins of the people. The bullock and one of the goats were slain.

* Esther, ix. 20 - 32.

The high priest went alone into the Holy of holies, and having burnt incense there returned. He entered again, to sprinkle a portion of the blood of the two victims, on the lid of the sacred ark, and on the floor before it. He then, in the court of the temple, laid his hands on the head of that goat which had been reserved, called the scape-goat ; and having made, in the name of all the people, a confession of sins, he transferred those sins emblematically to the animal before him, which was immediately sent into the wilderness, and there set free. The bullock and the goat which had been slain were not burnt upon the altar, but carried without the camp or city, and there entirely consumed. The services of expiation had been performed by the high priest in the ordinary dress of the sacrificing priests. He now assumed his own splendid robes, and offered other sacrifices for the people and for himself. It was only on this day that the Holy of holies, the sacred recess of the temple, was entered by any human being.

Four other fasts were instituted about the time of the captivity, in memory of events connected with that calamitous period ; referring respectively to the commencement of the attack by Nebuchadnezzar, the capture of Jerusalem by his forces, the

burning of the temple, and the murder of Gedaliah. Other fasts of a similar character have been observed by the later Jews, having reference to the final melancholy overthrow of Jerusalem by Titus, and to other national calamities.

The sacrifices offered by individuals, were distinguished into *burnt-offerings*, which were, except in some peculiar cases, consumed entire; — *sin or trespass-offerings*, the flesh of which, after certain parts had been burnt upon the altar, was the perquisite of the priests; — and *thank-offerings*, the unburnt parts of which formed the substance of a thanksgiving feast for the person who had presented them. The only animals which it was lawful to sacrifice, were of the ox, sheep, and goat kinds, with turtle-doves and young pigeons. Offerings of flour, oil, and wine were presented with the animals; the flour was sometimes made into cakes, over which the oil was poured. These are, in the authorized English Version of the Bible, styled “meat-offerings,” — a use of the term “meat” which does not to modern ears, convey a correct impression.

The law of Moses was peculiarly minute in its directions relative to external purity. By certain acts, some of which were in many cases unavoidable, as by touching a dead body, or a sepulchre,

a stain of legal uncleanness was received. A similar stain, but in a still greater degree, existed in all cases of leprosy. The man who was appointed to convey the scape-goat to the wilderness, was considered as unclean from his contact with an animal on which the sins of the whole nation had been emblematically heaped. In many cases, as in the last mentioned, the uncleanness ceased at evening, the subject of it having previously bathed. In other instances, a peculiar rite was employed, the unclean person being sprinkled with water mixed with the ashes of a red heifer, which had been slain and burnt without the city with peculiar ceremonies. Other and more complicated rites accompanied the restoration of the leper who had recovered from his disease.

Many of these regulations were obviously designed to secure the health of the community. Similar in its object appears to have been the distinction between clean and unclean animals, though for this there existed another equally powerful reason. The people were thus debarred from many species of food in use among the neighbouring tribes, were consequently prevented from attending their idolatrous feasts, and were thus preserved from corruption. The interdicted species of food comprise quadrupeds which neither rumi-

nate, nor have cloven feet. The swine, which though cloven-footed does not ruminates, being the animal of this class most extensively eaten among other nations, was held in peculiar abhorrence among the Jews. Fishes without scales or without fins, serpents, some species of birds, and nearly all insects, food of any kind which had been consecrated to idols, and the kid boiled in its mother's milk, were prohibited. The last regulation seems to have been pointed against some idolatrous or superstitious observance. Blood, and some of the fat parts of clean animals were likewise forbidden, not as unclean, but as sacred. The same prohibition extended to animals which having been torn by wild beasts, or dying of themselves, retained the blood in them.

It was a custom not uncommon, and existing even before the time of Moses, for persons to debar themselves for a season or for life, from the use of wine, strong drink, vinegar, and clusters of grapes. Such persons were called Nazarites; they avoided with peculiar care, contamination from corpses and sepulchres, and permitted their hair to grow. In some instances, as in the case of Sampson, and perhaps in that of John the Baptist, parents consecrated their child, even before his birth, by the vow of a Nazarite. When the

period for which the vow had been made, was completed, the Nazarite offered sacrifices, and having shorn his hair, cast it into the fire. If he were accidentally contaminated during the period of Nazariteship, special purifications were necessary. In later times, vows of abstinence, resembling partially that of the Nazarite, were frequently made. Thus Paul, we are informed, had his head shorn in Cenchrea, "for he had a vow." * Had it been the regular vow of Nazariteship, the ceremony of cutting off the hair, by which it was concluded, could only have been performed at the temple, with the customary sacrifices.

Vows of other descriptions by which persons or property were consecrated to God, were in use before the time of Moses, and received with some restrictions the sanction of his law. He permitted the redemption of what was thus devoted, and gave to the head of a family the power of annulling vows which his wife or child might have made. If he however neglected to employ this power when first made acquainted with the vow, he was regarded as having yielded it his sanction, which he could not afterwards recal.

There was a species of vow, by which property,

* Acts, xviii. 18.

persons, and even nations might be devoted to utter destruction, and which was irrevocable. This, distinguished by the name of Herem, "the curse," appears to have been, like some other portions of the Mosaic law, a part of the previous national usages, too deeply identified with the character of the people to be changed by legal enactments, and therefore wisely left by the legislator to be gradually obliterated by the general civilizing influence of his institutions. The vow of Jephtha has by some been regarded as an instance of this kind of imprecation.

It has been already stated that the first-born males, both of man and beast, were regarded as sacred to the Lord. The tribe of Levi were indeed substituted for the first-born of the human race, so far as the services of the sanctuary were concerned; but the custom was retained of presenting the child before the Lord, and redeeming him by the payment of a price to the sacred treasury. The first-born of all animals not proper for sacrifice were to be redeemed in a similar manner, or put to death; but those of the ox, sheep, and goat kinds were slain before the altar, and their flesh appropriated to the priests. Our Saviour, as the first-born child of Mary, was presented in the temple and redeemed, "after the

custom of the law ;" * and it was on that occasion that he received the prophetic benedictions of the aged Simeon and Anna.

The Israelites were required to present to the Lord, the first fruits of their fields, vineyards, and orchards, with the first productions of honey and wool. Those who brought these offerings came, we are told, in procession, each bearing his basket, and the whole preceded by music, with an ox having his horns gilded, and a crown of olives on his head. This animal was destined for sacrifice. The baskets of the rich were of the most costly materials, silver or gold ; and even the king, when present, carried his own upon his shoulder. The procession entered the temple amidst the songs of the Levites ; and each, presenting his offering, repeated the words prescribed for the occasion, " I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us ;" † then delivering the basket to the priest, he repeated the beautiful passage beginning, " A Syrian ready to perish was my father ; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty,

* Luke, ii. 27.

† Deut., xxvi. 3. &c.

and populous." Then having prostrated themselves before the altar, they retired to pass the day in festivity. As the several great feasts took place at those periods when the different species of fruits attained their perfection, offerings of this kind probably were during those periods almost constantly presented.

Of the first fruits, portions of animals slain in sacrifice, and the money paid for the redemption of the first-born, the sacred revenue in part consisted. But it was chiefly furnished from the tythes. A tenth of all the produce of the earth, and of herds and flocks, was devoted to the Levites. Another tenth the proprietors were commanded to expend in religious and charitable festivity at the sanctuary. Of the former tythes which were the perquisite of the Levites, a subsequent division was made among themselves, and a tenth appropriated to the priests, properly so called, the descendants of Aaron.

On the subject of prayer, few regulations were given by Moses, though he appointed suitable forms of expression for the public acknowledgment of Divine goodness, and for the benediction to be pronounced upon the people by the priest.*

* Numbers vi. 24, 25. Deut. xvi. 3-15.

Prayers were generally offered in a standing posture, though the attitudes of kneeling and prostration were sometimes used. The Jews always turned toward Jerusalem in prayer, as the Mahometans do toward Mecca. The direction thus assumed is by the latter called *Kebla*, "the front"; the Jews give to the direction toward their holy city the name *Debirah*, "the back part", because the Holy of Holies, the peculiar point of their veneration, was in the back part of the temple. The hours of nine, twelve, and three, were among the later Jews observed for purposes of prayer.

On particular occasions of rejoicing, sacred dances were introduced, in which the chief men of the nation thought it no dishonor to engage. Music was employed in the services of the sanctuary, twenty-four distinct choirs having been formed by David from the Levites, who attended in rotation at the temple. They were arranged about the great altar on solemn occasions, and combined the use of various instruments with male and female voices.

The worship of the synagogue does not appear to have existed until after the captivity; and it is observable that from the establishment of this regular system of popular religious instruction, no

more is heard of the prevalence of idolatry. The arrangement of the ancient synagogues is observed in the buildings erected among the modern Jews for the same purpose. The building is divided into two portions, corresponding with the holy and most holy places in the temple, though generally the more sacred portion is nothing more than a closet or chest, placed at the western end of the edifice. In this the books of the law are kept. A railed elevation occupies the central space, corresponding with the altar, and from this, as from a pulpit, the services are conducted. The men are seated around promiscuously, the females in a latticed portion at the sides, or in galleries. Portions from the law and the prophets were read, and in later times translated from the old Hebrew, to the more modern dialect of Syria. The people were also addressed either by persons regularly appointed, or by any present who was regarded as qualified. In one instance, we find our Saviour thus officiating;* and Paul commonly availed himself of such opportunities to preach the gospel.† The preservation of order was committed to three persons, known as rulers of the synagogue. Another, sometimes designated

* Luke, iv. 16.

† Acts, xiii. 14; xiv. 1.

as the angel, that is, messenger, or representative, usually conducted the services.

The origin of those sects among the Jews to which reference is made in the New Testament, can at this late period be traced only by conjecture. We first hear of them as existing, under the earlier princes of the Asmonean family, nor is the supposition improbable which traces the Pharisees to the Hasidim or Assideans, † meaning pious and devoted men, who are spoken of in the history of the Maccabees, as having coöperated with Judas and his brethren in the deliverance of the nation from the Syrian yoke. These, from their zeal for the law, separating themselves from those who were disposed to tolerate heathen customs, acquired the name of Pharisees, or Separatists. But in time they became corrupt, shrouding the Mosaic law beneath a mass of observances derived from ancestral traditions. Those who now differed from them, naturally assumed a name of equal pretension, Zadikim (Sadducees), just men, or legalists; and rejecting all tradition, adhered to the law of Moses alone. The Pharisees believed in the immortality of the soul, in the existence of angels, good and bad, and in a Provi-

† 1 Maccabees, ii. 42.

dence controlling the affairs of men, but not in such a manner as to destroy the freedom of human actions. These doctrines the Sadducees denied. The one party were exposed to the temptations resulting from great popularity and a character for peculiar sanctity ; the others to all the evils resulting from the want of strong religious sanctions. The besetting sins of the Pharisee were hypocrisy and pride,—those of the Sadducee, impiety and neglect of moral duty. The Pharisees possessed unbounded influence with the people at large, but their opponents were among the wealthy and the educated, and not unfrequently acquired an ascendancy, even in the Sanhedrim. Our Saviour's bitterest enemies were of the Pharisaic party, against whose hypocrisy he had warned the people ; but after his ascension, the persecution experienced by his followers in Judea proceeded chiefly from the Sadducees, whose views were directly contradicted by the assertion, that the Messiah had risen from the dead.

The scribes and lawyers, so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, were the rabbis of the day, with their disciples ; men who devoted themselves to the study of the Mosaic law, and to collecting and transmitting the traditions of their predecessors. Our modern term lawyer, it will be

at once perceived, does not well describe the class of persons to whom it is applied in the New Testament. The Jewish lawyers were not advocates who pleaded in civil courts, but men who made the sacred books their study, and whose profession thus answered more nearly, though with great difference, to that of divinity in modern times.

More anciently, the name of scribe was applied to all officers whether civil or military, whose station required the keeping of a record; and, in general, to all men of learning.

There existed in the days of our Saviour, a sect, to which no reference is made in the Christian Scriptures, as their secluded life probably offered no occasion for intercourse between them and our Lord or his disciples. They bore the name of Essenes, and lived in communities of their own, having all things in common, devoting themselves to abstinence, labor, and contemplation. Their doctrines nearly resembled those of the Pharisees, with some difference, however, respecting the Divine Providence, and the will of man. They believed that all actions and events proceeded from God alone, or from destiny. They asserted the possession of an acquaintance with the secret names of the angels, which they were

not at liberty to reveal. They were in general opposed to oaths, only employing them in the admission of members to their community. They discountenanced slavery and war. Few among them, and those few under peculiar restrictions, entered the married state. They prepared, by bathing and change of apparel, for their meals, which consisted of vegetable food alone, were always introduced and concluded with prayer, and partaken with this exception in perfect silence. The Therapeutæ in Egypt differed from the Essenes only by still more scrupulous abstinence from the society of others, and from every species of indulgence, devoting themselves wholly to a contemplative life. Their name is only a Greek translation from that of their brethren in Judea, both signifying physicians, and derived probably from that familiarity with the medicinal properties of plants, which persons thus secluded would possess the means of acquiring.

There have been in almost every age, some sects or individuals bearing a resemblance to the Essenes. Perceiving how much the gifts of God are abused, men have fancied that their use was to be entirely rejected, except so far as was absolutely necessary for the support of life. But

the experiments which have thus been made, to alter the constitution of society, have seldom been productive of good. In the world as it is organized, God has placed us, to enjoy its pleasures in moderation, to resist its temptations, and to perform the duties to which it invites us. We are to do our best for its gradual advancement, by promoting intelligence and virtue around us, not by separating from our fellow-men, declaring war against the customs of society, and attempting to create the world anew, on what we presumptuously fancy an improved plan. Thus did not Jesus Christ. He instituted no ascetic community; he never "forbade to marry," and he looked benignantly on innocent festivity; but he gave precepts of holiness and truth, which have established the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of millions, have altered materially the condition of the world, and will never finish their glorious course till they have destroyed every existing relic of human weakness, barbarism, and irreligion.

Besides the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, some other sects existing in the time of our Saviour demand our notice. Of the Herodians, we know nothing except what we can gather from their name, and from the circumstances under

which they appear in the New Testament. They came to Jesus, with the Pharisees, to propose the delicate political question, whether it was lawful to pay tribute to the Romans.* Our Lord warned his disciples against their doctrines in connexion with those of the Pharisees;† and the latter sect took counsel with the Herodians how they might destroy Jesus.‡ They appear to have been the court party, devoted to the interests of Herod Antipas and of the Romans, and disposed to assimilate the national manners and belief as far as possible to those of their heathen rulers. The question of tribute must therefore have been often discussed between them and the bolder among the Pharisees, who were but little disposed to render such marks of subjection to a heathen power. They appeared to do honor to Jesus by submitting the important question to his decision, while in fact they thought that in whatever way he might decide, he would expose himself either to popular indignation, or to the jealousy of the government. Jesus decided that the tribute ought to be paid, showing them by an appeal to the very stamp upon their coin, that they were confessedly sub-

* Matt. xxii. 16-22.

† Mark, viii. 15.

‡ Mark, iii. 6.

jects of the Roman power, enjoying the advantages of its protection, and having therefore no right to claim exemption from contributing to its support. At the same time by instructing them to remember their duty to God, he prevented those around him from identifying his sentiments with those of the irreligious Herodian party. Beside the tax due to the Romans, there was among the Jews an assessment for the service of the temple, payable only in their own national coin, the half-shekel, and to these different species of currency and of taxation, our Saviour appears to have alluded, in his decision; "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God, the things which be God's."

There existed another party, under the name of Zealots, whose origin is traced to Judas of Gaulan in Galilee, the leader of an insurrection about nine years after our Saviour's birth. They asserted that it was lawful for an individual to put to instant death, any one whom he might see violating the great requisitions of the law; a principle which they defended by the examples of Phin-eas and Mattathias. Such acts of wild justice were styled "the judgment of zeal." Simon, one of our Lord's disciples, appears to have been at first a member of this revolutionary sect; the

title which he sometimes receives in Scripture, translated erroneously "the Canaanite,"* is in fact a Hebrew term expressive of the same meaning with the Greek "Zelotes," and the English "Zealot." This class of enthusiasts, we have already seen, bore a prominent part in the war which terminated the existence of the Jewish state.

We find the name Hellenist, or Grecian, occasionally employed in the New Testament in reference to some class among the Jews. It designated those, whether of Hebrew descent or proselytes, who resided beyond the limits of Palestine, and whose common language was the Greek. These were very numerous, and spread through many lands. In Egypt they possessed a temple, erected by Onias, of which mention has already been made; and in the synagogues of the Hellenists in Asia Minor and Greece, Paul and his fellow-teachers found many who received with gladness the gospel which they proclaimed.

The Jews received as members of their nation, those foreigners who were willing to adopt their laws, both moral and ritual. Such were called

* Matt. x. 4. Mark, iii. 18, compared with Luke, vi. 15. Acts, i. 13.

Proselytes. They received the rite of circumcision, and were baptized, by immersion. This baptism was regarded as an emblem of their purification from idolatry, and of their being regenerated, or admitted by a second birth to a new and more holy life. So far was this idea of a new life prevalent, that later Jewish writers assert that baptism destroyed all former ties, whether of relationship or of matrimonial connexion, so that the proselyte was no longer to be regarded as the son of his heathen parents, or the husband of his heathen wife. By the same current idea of a new birth, our Saviour illustrated to Nicodemus the entire change of character and views involved in the adoption of his religion.*

Another class of proselytes are spoken of by Jewish writers, who characterize them as Proselytes of the Gate, in distinction from those already spoken of, who are designated Proselytes of Righteousness. The proselytes of the gate were those gentiles who, without conforming themselves to the law of Moses, acknowledged the unity of God, and obeyed his moral law. Their obligations were defined in the seven precepts said to have been given to Noah, which enforced abstinence from idolatry, — commanded the worship of the

* John, iii. 1 - 13.

One True God, — forbade incest, homicide, and robbery, — prescribed the punishment of death for murder, — and declared the eating of blood to be unlawful. It admits of doubt, however, whether such persons were regarded, at any period while the Jewish state existed, as *proselytes* in any sense of the word. The pertinacity with which the Jewish Christians insisted on the adoption of the whole Mosaic law by their gentile brethren, would lead us to suppose that they were far from admitting the claim of any class of persons to any degree of connexion with the house of Israel, unless by obedience to the ritual as well as to the moral code.

Shortly after the death of the elder Agrippa, the Jews acquired two proselytes of great distinction, Izates, king of Adiabene, and his mother Helena. Although political motives of great weight were employed to deter him, Izates complied with all the requisitions of the ceremonial law, and became avowedly a member of the Jewish community; — a strong proof that the Jews in his day, did not acknowledge as an authorized class those who were subsequently designated Proselytes of the Gate. The example of Izates was followed by some of his principal nobility. He reigned gloriously for twenty-four years, and was buried, with his mother, at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER X.

POLITICAL AND CIVIL ANTIQUITIES.

"The weak, against the sons of spoil and wrong,
Banded, and watched their hamlets, and grew strong;
States rose, and in the shadow of their might
The timid rested. To the reverent throng
Grave and time-wrinkled men, with locks all white,
Gave laws, and judged their strifes, and taught the way of right."
Bryant.

THE leading peculiarities of the Hebrew constitution have already attracted our notice, while investigating the history and religious antiquities of the Holy Land. We have seen the Israelites receiving their fundamental laws from God himself, and acknowledging him as their king. Commissioned by this Almighty Sovereign, Moses held the office of deliverer and lawgiver, and Joshua subsequently appeared as the military leader of his people, in their conquest of the promised land.

The nature of things forbade that either the legislator or the military chief should have a successor in his peculiar province; and for many years the Holy Land exhibited the spectacle of an agricultural republic, occasionally verging towards monarchy, as the talents of some great leader gained for him the affections of the people, but always retaining its theocratic character. During the government of the Judges, the nation might, in one point of view, be regarded as a federative republic; for the tribes appear to have been individually more regularly organized than the nation which they composed. They acted, in public emergencies, sometimes separately, and sometimes in connexion. Each had its Prince, whose office appears to have been in general hereditary, but with such exceptions as frequently occur in a rude state of society, where strength and courage are regarded as conferring a stronger claim to preëminence than any which birth could give unaccompanied by those valuable qualities. The precise degree of power entrusted to the princes of the tribes, is not distinctly marked in the sacred records; nor is it probable that it was regulated so much by established custom, as by the qualifications of those who held the office. This species of chieftainship appears to have lost its ascendancy as the

government of regular laws and appointed judges became generally prevalent ; for we hear little of the princes of the tribes after the first period of the Hebrew state.

At the same early period, it was customary, on important occasions, to summon assemblies of the people : sometimes the elders and judges alone were summoned. In an assembly of the most comprehensive kind, including women ; children, and even strangers, the Israelites ratified their covenant with the Almighty by the curses and blessings pronounced from Ebal and Gerizim ;* and in two successive meetings of the most distinguished among the people, Joshua delivered his farewell charge that they should remain true to the God of their fathers.†

It is a peculiarity of the Mosaic constitution, evincing the wisdom which was employed in framing it, that, though affording every facility for the continuance of a confederated republic of the tribes, it anticipated the future wish of the people to introduce a monarchical government, and provided for the emergency. In the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses established cer-

* Josh. viii. 33.

† Josh. xxiv. 1.

tain principles of great importance, which were to be observed in the establishment and continuance of the monarchy. The king was to be a Hebrew, and designated for his office by Divine favor. He was forbidden to form a numerous harem, to amass great treasures, or to organize large bodies of cavalry. The first of these restrictions was moral in its object; the second and third were designed to prevent the future kings from engaging in war for purposes of conquest. Equal wisdom was manifested in the prohibition of intercourse with Egypt, at that time and at many subsequent periods the most formidable neighbour of the Holy Land. The study and observance of the law, and especially of the restrictions just mentioned, was enforced upon the future monarch.

By comparing the accounts given of the accession of the Hebrew monarchs, it appears that, in the earlier period of the kingdom at least, it was customary for the people to convene in a general assembly on such occasions, and that a compact was then entered into, and ratified by oaths, between the king and his people. Thus on the elevation of Saul to the throne, Samuel "told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." *

* 1 Sam. x. 25.

David, when, on the death of Ishbosheth, he was recognized king of all Israel, "made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord." * No such covenant however appears to have been formed on the accession of Solomon, who was elevated to the throne by his father, on a sudden emergency, and at a period when the royal power was at its height. On the death of Solomon, the assembly of the people met, and finding Rehoboam unwilling to adopt reasonable regulations to the exercise of his authority, ten tribes relinquished their allegiance. In subsequent times, when the eldest son succeeded his father as a matter of course, this recognition by an assembly of the people, and the formation of a compact between the ruler and the ruled, were probably not regarded as essential.

The royal power was at first far from being unlimited. Saul indeed, after his inauguration, returned to his ordinary labor, and was coming after the herd out of the field, when he received the tidings of an invasion by the Ammonites. The subsequent victory confirmed his throne; and during his reign and that of his successor the kingly authority gradually increased; yet

* 2 Sam. v. 3.

David was unable to punish Joab for the murder of Abner. Solomon ascended the throne when the royal power had nearly attained its height, and he reigned an absolute prince. He paid little regard to those salutary laws which interdicted to the monarchs of Israel the collection of numbers of horses, of extensive treasures, and a numerous harem; and his despotic rule pressed so heavily on the people, as to occasion the loss to his son of more than half his dominions. Few of the subsequent kings, either in Israel or Judah, appear to have exercised such uncontrolled dominion. Ahab and Jezebel were unable to acquire the property of Naboth, without intriguing to have him condemned on a false accusation: this would not have been the case in a state accustomed blindly to submit to the will of a despot.

None of the Hebrew sovereigns except David appears to have exercised the right of appointing as his successor, any other than his eldest son; there is however some ground in modern oriental customs for the conjecture, that Solomon derived a title to the crown from the circumstance that he was born while his father was king of Israel. However this may have been, his elder brothers, Absalom and Adonijah, were led by ambition to assert their supposed claims during the life of their father, to his grief and their own ruin.

The king at his inauguration was anointed with precious oil poured upon his head. He was then arrayed with the diadem and sceptre; and received the homage of the chief officers of the kingdom, in the form of a kiss. The new sovereign then entered the city in state, amid the acclamations of the people.

The royal diadem was a fillet bound around the head of the king; it was of costly materials, and adorned with precious stones. This, or a crown of gold ornamented with jewels, appears to have been worn on all state occasions by the monarchs of the Hebrews, as well as of other oriental nations. The sceptre was in the earliest times a javelin. Such was that of Saul, with which in his intervals of half insane depression, he attempted the life of David.* In later times the sceptre was a staff of wood ornamented with gold, and perhaps encased in a covering of that metal. The throne was an elevated and sumptuous chair of state, furnished commonly with a footstool. That of Solomon was of ivory and gold, with the figure of a lion on each side: it stood on a platform, elevated by six broad steps; and on each step was at either side the figure of a lion.†

* 1 Sam. xviii, 10. xix. 9. † 1 Kings, x. 18.

Of royal robes we know little, except that they were distinguished for their splendor. Jewish writers assert that they were white; but the evidence afforded in proof is scarcely sufficient. They were more probably purple, or of some color, like that, remarkable for magnificence.

The Hebrew monarchs do not generally appear to have shared in that custom of entire seclusion, which has generally been prevalent among oriental princes. Still, to behold the king was a favor not granted indiscriminately. Hence the expression "to see God" was used by the Hebrews to imply a degree of favor from the Deity, similar to that which a king bestows in admitting a subject to his presence. In approaching the sovereign, a degree of reverence was observed, which seems to have reached its height about the termination of David's reign, but which never extended to the *adoration* common in Persia and Syria, — a species of servility as blasphemous to God as it was debasing to man. The king's guards, among the Israelites, were designated by the names Cherethites and Pelethites, signifying executioners and couriers. On them devolved the duty of executing state criminals, and of conveying intelligence on public affairs.

The revenues of the king at first consisted of

voluntary gifts; but other sources of wealth soon opened, as the influence of the royal power began to be felt. During the reign of David, vast treasures appear to have been accumulated by conquest from neighbouring nations. Not only did the gold and silver of the conquered become the prey of the victor, but it was customary by the laws of war, to reduce the captives to the condition of slaves, and employ them in cultivating, for the profit of the king, the country which had been their own, or other portions of the royal domains. To such labor David compelled his Ammonitish prisoners, "putting them to saws, and to harrows of iron, and to axes of iron, and transferring them to the brick kiln." * The common version of this passage, which represents these various employments as so many means of destruction to the unfortunate prisoners, ascribes to David the most atrocious and at the same time the most whimsical cruelty. Where a war had not been pursued to the utter overthrow of either party, a tribute was commonly paid by the weaker as the price of peace. The royal flocks and herds are repeatedly mentioned, and were undoubtedly numerous,

* 2 Samuel, xii. 31. See Bishop Porteus's Sermon on the character of David.

forming a valuable source of revenue. They were pastured freely on the open plains eastward of Gilead. Taxes were imposed on merchants, chiefly foreigners, who passed in caravans through Judea, between Syria and the Red Sea. Solomon, in connexion with his ally, Hiram, king of Tyre, engaged to some extent in foreign commerce; but to this neither the character of the people, of their institutions, nor of the country they inhabited, appeared to be adapted, and few attempts were subsequently made. Direct taxation appears to have been sometimes resorted to; and Solomon raised a levy of thirty thousand men to assist in the erection of his edifices for civil and religious purposes.

- The Hebrew monarchy, though not absolutely unlimited, approached too near to the despotic model to have the duties of its subordinate executive offices very accurately defined. There were, however, *counsellors* to the king, and we read of *princes* or *nobles*, though whether they generally derived their eminence from birth, fortune, or merit, does not clearly appear. Some officers too there were, more immediately engaged in the administration of the kingdom. Such was the recorder, or secretary, by whom the public

records were prepared and kept. * Another high dignitary was the "king's friend", "the king's companion", or he "that was next to the king". † Hushai, the Archite, held this station under David; and when, at the command of his master, he in appearance deserted his service for that of Absalom, the latter received him with contempt for his apparent faithlessness. — "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" ‡ This instance shows that the name was truly descriptive of the station. The "king's friend" was a favorite and confidential counsellor, who enjoyed great power even in the court of an able monarch; and of whose supreme influence over an indolent, voluptuous prince, we have an instance in the history of Haman. The steward or governor of the household held an office, of the importance of which we may judge from the prophecy of Isaiah (xxii. 15, &c.) predicting the downfall of Shebna, who held it unworthily, and the elevation of Eliakim in his stead. After the accomplishment of the prophecy, Eliakim appears at the head of the deputation

* 2 Samuel, viii. 16. 1 Kings, iv. 3.

† 1 Kings, iv. 5.

‡ 2 Samuel, xv. 32. xvi. 16. compared with 1 Chron. xxvii. 33.

appointed to confer with Rabshakeh, the ambassador of Sennacherib. * To other officers were committed the custody of the royal treasures, and the charge of the revenue of various kinds.

Great authority appears to have been enjoyed by the king's mother. She evidently held the station of first matron in the kingdom, which in modern times is enjoyed by the sovereign's consort. Thus, in the record of the kings of Israel and Judah, when the accession of any prince is noticed, his mother's name is added, where a modern annalist would place that of the queen-consort. This peculiarity probably arose from the polygamy which appears, notwithstanding the express restraint of the law, to have been generally practised by the Hebrew princes. However a monarch might wish to honor the favorite among numerous wives, he could not make her the sole partner of his throne, or secure for her as such the reverence of his subjects; but when her son succeeded, the honor of being mother to the king distinguished her at once above all her former equals. The "king's mother" appears to have retained that dignified title, even though she should survive her son; for Maachah, the grand-

* Isaiah, xxxvi. 3.

mother of king Asa, is in one passage called his mother, and held the dignity of queen till she was degraded by her descendant on account of her idolatry. *

We find but two instances in which the wives of reigning princes appear to have possessed the station of queen; and in both cases, the distinction arose from the royal birth of the individuals. They were, the Egyptian princess whom Solomon married; and Jezebel, the wife Ahab, and daughter of the king of Tyre.

The Mosaic law required the appointment of judges in every city. Their number however was not specified, nor was it pointed out in what manner they should be chosen. This was probably at first, by a species of irregular popular election, the voice of the community designating for the office those most distinguished for wisdom and experience. The most important causes were carried up to the high priest or judge of the nation; and, when the government became monarchical, to the king. According to Josephus, the judges in each city were seven in number, each of whom was attended by two officers of the tribe

* Compare 1 Kings, xv. 2. with verses 10, 13. of the same chapter.

of Levi. The rabbins speak of a council of twenty-three in each city. It is not difficult to conceive that this body may have consisted of the seven judges, the Levites their assessors, and two other officers of distinction. The highest tribunal was the Sanhedrin, or more properly the Beth-din or House of Judgment; the word Sanhedrin or Sanhedrim being a corruption of the Greek term *Sunedrion*, meaning an assembly. The later Jewish writers maintain that the Sanhedrin existed uninterruptedly in their nation, from the time of Moses to the destruction of the patriarchate of Tiberias. But it appears that the seventy elders chosen by Moses in the wilderness were appointed rather to communicate to the people the commands of God and of his prophet, than to exercise any power as a deliberative body; nor do we find any proof of the existence of such an assembly, till the later period of the Jewish commonwealth. It was probably instituted on the recovery of their liberty in the time of the first heroic Maccabees. This tribunal consisted of seventy-two members. Its presiding officer was called Nasi or Prince of the Sanhedrin. He was assisted in his duties by the Ab-beth-din, or Father of the House of Judgment, who sat at his right hand; and the Hachem, or wise man, whose

place was at the left. While the temple stood, the high priest held the office of Nasi. The place of assembling was, according to the rabbins, a splendid circular hall, called Gazith, within the precincts of the temple; but from this they retired to another apartment within the sacred courts, when deprived by the Romans of the power of deciding in capital cases. In the last years of the Jewish state they appear, from the account of Josephus, to have had their council chamber near the temple, but beyond its enclosure. It is not improbable that this place of meeting formed a portion of the palace which the high priest occupied by virtue of his office, and in which Jesus was tried by the Sanhedrin.

There was a species of court allowed to the Jews by the Roman laws, consisting of referees, — one being selected by each of the contending parties, and a third by both conjointly. This is sometimes designated as the court of three judges. The synagogues were for certain purposes judicial tribunals; — having authority to inflict the punishments of scourging, and of excommunication. The power was probably exercised by a council of the officers in each synagogue, and extended only to offences against the religious feelings or

views of the community, and to the preservation of order in their own assemblies.

Trials were generally conducted in the morning. Thus we find that though Jesus, on his apprehension, underwent an examination at night before Annas, the ex-high priest, and afterwards before Caiaphas and the elders, informally convened, it was not till morning that he was tried by the Sanhedrin.* Every circumstance of that history is worthy of notice. Some † have supposed that, as Pilate twice told the Jews to take the condemnation of Jesus into their own hands, this was in fact done, and that the crucifixion was by order of the Sanhedrin. But besides that the history leaves no doubt that the immediate agents were Roman soldiers, the Jews certainly would not have remained debating the question with Pilate, when he had granted them all they asked. The language of the Roman, "Take ye him and judge him according to your laws"; and, "Take ye him and crucify him, for I find no fault in him"; obviously meant no more than to decline acting in the case; as if he had said, "Take ye

* Matt. xxvii. 1. Mark, xv. 1. Luke, xxii. 66.

† See Jahn's *Archæology*, translated by Prof. Upham; sect. 244. page 301. John, xviii. 31. ix. 6. with the context.

him, and, — if you dare, if you will assume the responsibility, — crucify him. I will not, for I find no fault in him. Since you are determined that he shall die, use your own power in the case; — and take the consequences.” The Jews, instead of availing themselves of such a doubtful permission, renewed their clamors, and appealing to the self-interest of Pilate, prevailed on him to command the execution of Jesus.

It was, according to the rabbins, unlawful to execute the sentence of death on the same day upon which the trial had been held. Whether their authority for the assertion is good may be doubted; but if such a rule existed, the Sanhedrin did not violate it in the case of our Saviour; since the sentence, though first pronounced by them, was confirmed and carried into execution by another authority.

In the most ancient times, the place of trial was in the gates of the cities. Many of the peculiarities of that period combined to render this place eligible for such a purpose. In times when every district a few miles in extent, was occupied by a distinct tribe, and when these tribes were often at war with one another, it was not safe for the dwellings of men to be scattered as at present over the land, each house in the midst of the

fields cultivated by its occupant. Men therefore in that iron age dwelt universally in towns, and, unlike our modern cities and villages, whose limits are marked simply by imaginary lines, those towns were surrounded with walls, and prepared in every respect for defence. In the morning the husbandmen went forth from the cities or walled villages to the fields; in the evening they returned. The gates then were naturally places of resort, from the close connexion between the city and the surrounding country. Here the judges, chosen generally from the oldest of the people, sat on a raised floor furnished with carpets and cushions for their accommodation. The accuser and the accused appeared before them; — the latter frequently with the symbols of sorrow which were employed in mourning. The witnesses were sworn, and, in some instances, the parties concerned. It would seem that sometimes the lot was resorted to, for the settlement of doubtful points; * and we find at an early period, some cases of national importance decided by a similar appeal; probably to the Urim and Thummim, the sacred lot of the high priest.† The sentence was commonly pronounced and executed

* Prov. xviii. 18.

† Joshua, vii. 16 – 18.

with the utmost promptness. Prisons, in the earlier ages of the Hebrew state, appear to have been nearly unknown; though at a period still earlier, we find the mention of one in Egypt, "the house of the captain of the guard,"* in which Joseph was confined. It would not appear that buildings expressly for the purpose of confinement were erected in Palestine before the captivity; but in instances where imprisonment is adverted to, the house of some public officer, or sometimes a dry well, was used for the purpose. Of the occasional severity of such imprisonment, we may judge by the case of Jeremiah, who was confined without any form of trial in a damp and miry well, so that but for the influence of a worthy courtier with the weak-minded king, he must have died from the want of pure air.†

We learn from our Saviour's admonition, Matt. v. 24., that in more modern times, the custom of imprisoning debtors was introduced. It would appear from Matt. xyiii. 28-34, that corporal punishments or tortures were sometimes employed, in that age, to compel the payment of debts. The regulations of the Mosaic law, however, in relation to this subject, exhibit the lenity which

* 1 Sam. xiv. 41.

† Jer. xxxviii. 1-13.

breathes through all the permanent enactments of that admirable code. The creditor was permitted to claim pledges for the payment of what was due him, but not himself to enter the house of his debtor in order to receive the pledge, since an unfeeling man might abuse such an opportunity to insult the poverty of the inmates, or to select as pledges articles of indispensable necessity. To take the upper or the nether millstone of the handmill commonly in use and necessary to the preparation of the simplest meal, was absolutely prohibited, with the strong expression, "He taketh a man's life to pledge." * If the upper garment was taken, which was the covering by night as well as by day of the poorer classes, it was to be returned at evening.† With these restrictions, however, there remained such security to the creditor for obtaining his just dues, as would generally prevent the success of the fraudulent. Lands, houses, and even the person of the debtor with his family, might be sold to discharge his obligation. Nor was the last provision so severe as at first sight it might seem; since no Hebrew, without his own full consent, could be reduced to slavery for a longer term than six years.

* Deut. xxiv. 6.

† Exodus, xxii. 26.

The punishments inflicted under the Mosaic law were regulated by such principles as united the sanction of sufficient severity with proper regard to the differences existing in the demerit of offenders. The sin and trespass offerings, required for some transgression, may be regarded in the light of punishments, since they included some humiliation in the confession of the offence, and also a small pecuniary fine, in the value of the animal sacrificed. Fines were more directly exacted for some offences, and were substituted for the corporal punishment denounced against others. Theft was punished by compelling restitution; in ordinary cases, of double the amount stolen; but for the theft of a sheep, four-fold its value was required, and for an ox, five-fold. The ground of this distinction appears to have been in the greater facilities which existed for stealing such animals, and the importance of their security in an agricultural state. If the guilty individual were unable to pay the penalty, he might be sold, and even his wife and children, to raise the sum. If a man were detected in the act of theft at night, he might lawfully be slain; the darkness was regarded as heightening at once his guilt, and the danger of the person on whose property he had intruded. But if the oc-

currence took place after sunrise, the slayer was regarded as guilty of murder. For some offences the punishment of scourging was prescribed. The number of stripes was not to exceed forty ; and the later Jews, lest they should accidentally go beyond the number, limited the infliction to "forty, save one." They used for the purpose, a whip having three lashes, so that three stripes were given at each blow, and the number thirty-nine completed in thirteen applications of the scourge. More-anciently, the punishment was inflicted with a rod.

For injuries to the person, such as the destruction of any member of the body, retaliation on the body of the offender was prescribed by the law. This however might be remitted, by the aggrieved person, for a pecuniary fine. The false witness was, on the same equitable principle, condemned to the punishment to which his testimony, if successful, would have betrayed an innocent person.

Blinding, of which we meet a few instances, rather among neighbouring nations than among the Jews, was more properly a measure of prevention than of punishment, being inflicted on those whose claims or influence, were they not thus reduced to helplessness, might excite disturbances against the government of the country.

Thus king Zedekiah was blinded by order of Nebuchadnezzar; and on a similar principle, in later times, Antigonus mutilated the ears of Hyrcanus II., to incapacitate him from again filling the office of high priest, which could be held only by one free from corporeal blemish.

For some offences it was enacted, that the criminal should be "cut off from the people." This is generally understood to relate to the punishment of death; — the idea of the Talmudists, who refer it to excommunication, appearing to be deficient in evidence for its support. In some instances the expression is varied in such a manner as to point rather to inflictions by the providence of God, without the intervention of earthly tribunals.

The punishment of death was commonly inflicted by stoning. The first stone was thrown by the witnesses, and afterwards the people promiscuously continued the assault, which in a few moments ended the sufferings of the criminal. When the punishment was inflicted for state offences, the criminal was put to death by the sword of a military executioner, in whatever manner the latter might choose to adopt. The punishments of hanging and burning, as used in extraordinary cases among the Hebrews, appear to

have been indignities offered to the body, after life was extinct. We find two instances recorded in Scripture of suicide by strangulation; but the punishment of death does not appear to have been ever inflicted in this manner. The instrument of Haman's execution, which took place in Persia, was a cross; and crucifixion was in the later period of the Jewish history, adopted as a mode of punishment by some of the Asmonean princes. Much has been written, from the time of Cicero to the present, on the severity of this mode of inflicting death; a mode employed among the Romans in the execution of slaves, and of criminals of the vilest class. Some idea may be formed of the degree of suffering endured by persons crucified, from the fact that life continued amid all the torment of wounds, fever, the unnatural posture, and the laceration of the nails, sleeplessness, hunger, and burning thirst, for hours and sometimes for days. More horrible in its immediate pain, but less protracted, was the punishment of sawing in sunder, asserted, on the somewhat doubtful authority of the Talmudists, to have been inflicted on Isaiah by order of king Manasseh.

When a man was found murdered, and all attempts to discover the perpetrator were in vain, it was commanded that the elders of the nearest

city should kill a heifer in a rough uncultivated valley, thus representing to the multitude around, the punishment which ought to fall upon the murderer; at the same time solemnly disclaiming any participation in the crime.*

One of the most singular, and at the same time most wise provisions of the Mosaic law was that which sheltered the person who had accidentally occasioned the death of another, from the unreasonable vengeance of the relatives of the person slain. A national feeling (akin to those which still exist among the wandering Arabs, and to some which modern Christian nations have derived from their Scandinavian progenitors), demanded from the next of kin to the slain person, that his death, though caused by accident, should be atoned for by the blood of the slayer. He on whom this duty of vengeance devolved was called Goel, "contaminated," "contaminated with blood," in reference to the stain which rested on his honor until his task of death should be performed. Our English translation renders this term, by the substitution of an equivalent idea, "avenger," "avenger of blood." It would have given occasion for numerous and endless

* Deut. xxi. 1-9.

feuds, had this savage custom been permitted to continue; since of course, when the Goel had performed his task of retribution, he would be in turn the object of revenge to the next kinsman of him whom he had slain. At the same time it would have been in vain to attempt the removal, by direct legislation, of a custom so incorporated with national feelings. The course pursued by the Hebrew legislator manifested the wisdom of inspiration. He appointed six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan, to which the accidental homicide might fly, and where he would be protected from the avenger of blood. This protection would there be yielded to him, not only by the authority of the magistrates but of religion itself; for these cities were the honored residence of the Levites, and thus possessed a degree of sanctity which it would be sacrilegious to invade. In the city of refuge, the fugitive remained till the death of the high priest. If found beyond its limits before that period, he might lawfully be slain by the avenger of blood; but on the death of the high priest he was at liberty to leave his sanctuary, and was no longer subject to the danger of assault. The same indulgence was extended to him who had slain a thief before the rising of the sun; and probably to all who had

committed manslaughter in casual rencounter; but the intentional murderer might be slain in the city of refuge, or taken even from the altar of God. When the fugitive reached the gate of the city of refuge, he declared his cause to the judges who were there presiding; and if the case was doubtful, he received their protection until the time appointed for his trial. If then found guilty of intentional murder, he was delivered up to the pursuer; if acquitted, he remained safely there, and, at the death of the high priest, returned in peace to his own land.*

We find in the Mosaic law, a single enactment, corresponding in some degree to what has been known in modern times by the name of *trial by ordeal*;—with this difference however,—that while such trials as were common in Europe during the dark ages, were the result of ignorance and superstition, the ordeal of the Hebrew law-giver, even if no immediate action of providence were anticipated to give it efficacy, was sanctioned by the deepest principles of human nature. It was employed to ascertain the guilt or innocence of a married woman, accused by her husband. She was obliged to repeat a fearful im-

* Numbers, xxxv. 9–34.

precation, to which she subjected herself if guilty, and afterwards to drink the water in which the written curse had been washed from the parchment, and mingled with dust from the holy place. All this, an innocent person would cheerfully perform; but no guilty female could bear to utter the fearful imprecations, and drink the bitter water, without exhibiting the combined effects of conscience, imagination, and the direct judgment of God.*

In almost every aspect under which we view the Hebrew commonwealth, the relations of the tribe of Levi are deserving of attention. That tribe is sometimes spoken of collectively, as the judges of the people. The law which deprived them of any portion in the distribution of the land, except the comparatively small territory of their cities, debarred them from agricultural pursuits, and rendered them necessarily a distinct order. By them were sustained those offices which now are more systematically distributed under the name of the learned professions. They were the physicians, the legal counsellors and deciders of disputes, the spiritual advisers of the people. They may perhaps be correctly styled an aristoc-

* Numbers, v. 11.

racy; but if so, it was an aristocracy of a remarkably moderate character. Their influence was that of superior intelligence, resulting from superior opportunities. The people of the other tribes were equally free; the Levites held among them the station, not of nobility, but of enlightened, educated fellow-citizens.

We cannot take leave of the Mosaic civil law, without adverting to its provisions of a sanitary character. A reference to the important subject of national health, may be discerned in all the regulations connected with personal purity, in the distinction between clean and unclean meats, in the rite of circumcision, and perhaps in some of the directions relative to agriculture. The laws respecting leprosy especially claim our notice, as well from the peculiar character of the disease, as from the wisdom displayed by the Hebrew legislator in his provisions with regard to it. This terrible malady displayed itself upon the skin, though it frequently lay dormant in the system for years, and manifested itself for the first time, in some moment of strong excitement. Such is by some supposed to have been the case of king Uzziah. The disease, though at length fatal, is slow in its operation; and the subject of it passes many years of debility and suffering before he is

removed. It is capable of being propagated by contact, and descends from parents to their children. In its earlier stages, the leprosy can with difficulty be distinguished from another cutaneous disorder, which is not contagious, nor injurious to the general health of the system. Hence the clear and particular directions given by Moses to the priests, to whom the office was entrusted of deciding upon the symptoms. The leper, when his case was pronounced to be of the malignant kind, was obliged to live apart from the dwellings of other men, to wear the rent clothing usual on occasions of mourning, to go with his head bare, and with a covering on his upper lip, and to cry to those who might approach him, "Unclean, unclean." By these regulations, severe as they may seem, lepers were known to be such and avoided, and the extension of the disease was prevented. Provision was also made for ascertaining and destroying what was styled leprosy in garments and in houses, — a mold, injurious to health, caused by insects, or by some chemical agent.*

* Lev. xiii. and xiv.

CHAPTER XI.

WAR, COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, AND THE ARTS.

“ He passed with his stern warriors on ;— the trump
 And the loud cymbal died upon the ear ;
 And as the king turned off his weary gaze,
 The last faint gleam had vanished, and the wood
 Of Ephraim had received a thousand men
 To whom its pleasant shadows were a grave.”

N. P. Willis.

THE divine revelations to man have never contemplated sudden changes in the constitution of human nature. Their operation has been, and continues to be, gradual ; the abuses which have existed in the world yield, one after another, before the extending influence of those principles which religion lays down. We have therefore no occasion for surprise that the custom of war should have been allowed to exist under the Mosaic dispensation, and that wars should have been conducted with a degree of ferocity, of which mod-

ern warfare exhibits but few examples. Consistently with that freedom of the human mind, which is essential to its full developement, it could not have been otherwise. The tendency of the Hebrew institutions was not however military. The kings were prohibited from forming large bodies of cavalry, which, though unnecessary in a defensive war carried on in so mountainous a country as Judea, would be indispensable for the prosecution of extensive conquests. Only in the reign of David did the Hebrews sustain for any length of time, the position of a conquering state. The laws of war enforced upon them by Moses, were as merciful as the spirit of his age would permit, with the exception of those which related to the tribes then occupying the land of promise, or who by offences of peculiar malignity had incurred the irrevocable sentence of extermination.

The arms in use among the Israelites were those which have been common in almost every nation, unacquainted with fire-arms. Their weapons of attack were the sword and long spear, used in combat hand to hand; and as missiles, the dart or javelin, arrows thrown by the bow, and stones by the sling. The bow was of great strength, and was bent by the weight of the body, one end of

the instrument being placed on the ground and kept steady by the foot. Arrows were made of reeds or light wood, and were sometimes kindled at the point before they were discharged from the bow. Much practice was necessary to give skill in the use of the sling, in which some nations at the present day exhibit surprising adroitness. The archers and slingers appear to have been chiefly from the tribes of Benjamin and Ephraim. The ordinary defensive armor included the coat of mail, consisting of plates for the breast and back, formed of metal, or of rough skins;—the shield, which varied in form and material, but was generally made of hides thickly folded, with a rim and central boss of metal;—the helmet, of skins, ornamented, and sometimes entirely covered, with brass;—and the greaves or military boots. The soldiers wore a short frock, suited for quickness of motion, and bound with a girdle from which the sword was suspended. Shields were anointed to preserve them from injury by moisture. Hence to “anoint the shield” is marked as one of the preparations for engaging in war.*

Notwithstanding the indefinite restriction of the law, the Hebrew monarchs, after the time of

* Isaiah, xxi. 5.

Solomon, generally employed cavalry to some extent. The saddle was simply a piece of cloth thrown on the back of the horse, without stirrups. Chariots of war constituted a formidable part in the array of oriental armies, and in the employ of the Canaanites, contributed much to prolong the struggle between them and the Hebrews.

Cities were fortified with high walls, strengthened at intervals by still loftier towers. The wall was commonly surrounded with a fosse, either dry or filled with water. At a period as early as the reign of King Uzziah, the custom was introduced of building walls with projecting angles, on the principle of the bastion, which gives the besieged the means of concentrating their force against their assailants from several points at once.* In the walls were strong gates, secured by bars, and covered in later times with plates of brass or iron. In the defence of cities, military engines were employed, which were bows and slings upon a large scale, worked by machinery, and casting large arrows, beams, stones, and balls of lead. The assailants, on the other hand, shook the walls with the battering ram; an immense beam with a brazen head, shaped like that

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, 15. Zeph. i. 16.

of a ram. This engine was hung on chains and urged forward by the united strength of the soldiers, who were themselves sheltered under a moveable roof. Mounds of earth too were raised to overtop the fortifications of the city, and thus enable the assailants to direct their missiles with greater advantage.

Until the age of the Maccabees, soldiers among the Israelites received no pay except their share of the spoils taken from the enemy. Military service was the duty of every citizen, from twenty to fifty years of age, when called on by the constituted authority. The levy was made by the "officers," or, as the word is generally understood to mean, genealogists. When the army was assembled, leave of absence was publicly given to every one who had recently built a house, or planted a vineyard, or who was under an unfulfilled matrimonial engagement, or had been married within the year; and finally, to every one who was willing to acknowledge his own faint-heartedness.* The army was commanded by captains of fifties, of hundreds, of thousands, and of myriads or ten-thousands; and over all were some principal officers, with the commander-in-

* Deut. xx. 5, 8.

chief. The army of David consisted of two hundred and eighty-eight thousand of his subjects, who performed military duty by successive months, twenty-four thousand being under arms at a time. David instituted a military order of merit, with different degrees of rank to those who had distinguished themselves. The highest rank was held by Adino, Eleazar, and Shammah, the "three mighty men," who, when David longed for water from the well of Bethlehem, broke through the host of the Philistines, and at the hazard of their lives, brought the hard-won beverage to the king. David would not drink, but poured it out unto the Lord. Next to these in rank were Abishai, Benaiah, and one, whose name is not given; and after these were about thirty, who formed the residue of this redoubted company. Joab, the commander-in-chief, held rank apparently superior to all.*

In battle, the Hebrews appear to have arranged their army generally in three divisions, the centre, and left and right wings. Before engaging in conflict, the soldiers were addressed by the priests in an exhortation, of which the substance is prescribed in the law.† In the age of the

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.

† Deut. xx. 2.

Judges and of Saul, the ark of God accompanied the army, and at such times sacrifices were offered. The sacred trumpets were sounded; the army shouted their battle-cry, which in some instances may have been inarticulate, but was sometimes the name of their leader, or an invocation to Jehovah.

It has been remarked as a singular fulfilment of prophecy, * that until the revolt against the Romans, the Jewish territory was never invaded at those periods when the people were engaged in their solemn festivals, which required the attendance of all at the temple. The remark admits of at least one exception, in the instance where Antiochus Sidetes exhibited his moderation by assisting the besieged Jews in the observance of their feast of tabernacles. Nor is it probable that before the captivity, the command, that all should repair to Jerusalem thrice in the year, was obeyed so scrupulously as to leave the country without defenders when there was any prospect of an invasion.

The situation of Palestine is eminently favorable for commerce. Open to the Mediterranean on its western side, and communicating south-

* Exodus, xxxiv. 24.

wardly with the regions bordering on the Red Sea, it presents a direct path for the intercourse between Europe and India. These advantages were well improved by the Phœnicians, whose commerce extended by sea through the Mediterranean, and beyond the streights of Gibraltar, while by caravans they held communication through Judea with the borders of the Red Sea. It might occasion surprise that Moses should not have availed himself of this favorable situation of his country, for encouraging a commercial spirit among his people. But the Hebrew lawgiver had higher views. The great principle of his legislation, to preserve among the Israelites the belief in the Divine Unity, could only be attained by separating his nation from the corrupting influences of an idolatrous world. His system therefore favored agriculture, and discouraged commerce, by the equal distribution of landed property among them, and by the numerous peculiarities which he enforced upon them, and which placed difficulties in the way of social intercourse between them and other nations. It was therefore seldom that the Israelites engaged extensively in commerce. The reign of Solomon afforded the first exception; but the enterprises of that period were conducted not by the people at

large, but by the king himself, in connexion with his ally, Hiram, king of Tyre. Solomon and Hiram traded together by the Mediterranean with Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain; and from Ezion-geber on the Red Sea, which formed a part of his dominions, the king sent ships, navigated by Tyrian seamen, to Ophir, supposed to be the same with Sofala in Southern Africa. After the death of Solomon, the trade declined. Jehoshaphat attempted to restore it, in connexion with Ahaziah, king of Israel; but his ships were injured by rough weather at Ezion-geber, and Jehoshaphat, regarding the event as a mark of divine disapprobation, refused to recommence the undertaking. We discover, however, from the book of Jonah, and from a passage in Ezekiel,* that commerce to some extent still continued to be carried on from Joppa and Jerusalem. After the age of the first Maccabees, the Jews became more commercial; though their zeal for the law had increased, they were obliged from their declining strength, to associate more freely with surrounding nations.

The transportation of merchandise by land was effected in the East, anciently as at present,

* xxvi. 2.

by caravans, or large companies of travelling merchants, associated for mutual defence. The company assemble at a short distance from the city, each furnished with the necessary arms and utensils. The merchandise is usually conveyed on camels. The command of the caravan is given to one of the most respected among its members; and a person well acquainted with the route is procured as a guide. Without the assistance of such a person to direct their march, and to discover the wells which lie at wide intervals in the desert, the undertaking would be one of the greatest danger. At night they encamp, if possible, near one of these wells, and keep torches burning that none may wander from the caravan and be lost. On arriving at their place of destination, they go at once to the khan or caravanserai, a large building consisting of an open court surrounded with unfurnished rooms. The traveller receives from the keeper of the building only the key of a room and a mat. He brings therefore his own furniture and provisions with him, and makes himself at home in the resting-place thus provided.

Coined money does not appear to have been in use among the Israelites previous to the captivity. The amount of the precious metals to be paid for an article was determined by weight.

Thus "Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant." * Thus, at a much later period, Jeremiah, in the purchase of a field, "weighed the money, even seventeen shekels of silver." † The shekel, therefore, and similar denominations of weight were applied also to distinguish value, and became in time the names of different species of coin.

The Hebrews were eminently an agricultural people. Moses had provided for the general adoption of such pursuits among them, by dividing the whole land among the families, and preventing the permanent alienation of any inheritance. He permitted, indeed, sales of land; but no such sale could be valid for a longer period than until the recurrence of the jubilee. Every fiftieth year, on the day of the great annual fast, the day of Propitiation, the magistrates caused the trumpet of the jubilee to sound. This fiftieth year was hallowed; labor in the fields was forbidden, and every family returned to their own inheritance, in whatever manner it had been alienated. If at any period before the recurrence

* Gen. xxiii. 16.

† Jer. xxxii. 9.

of the jubilee, the original owner of the land, or his nearest relative, was disposed to redeem it, he might do so; and the price to be paid by him was in proportion to the interval which must elapse before the jubilee.* By this law, Moses prevented those inequalities in the division of landed property, which in many communities have operated to render the cultivators of the soil mere tenants, subject to the arbitrary will of extensive proprietors. In Judea, the husbandman cultivated his own field, and all fields were alike of moderate extent. His family inheritance thus became the dearest possession of the Hebrew; for on it his ancestors had lived since their first settlement in the land. Under such circumstances, agriculture could not be otherwise than honorable. Saul was returning with the oxen from the field, when, as king of Israel, he received the news of the Ammonite invasion; and Elisha was ploughing when summoned to be the attendant and successor of Elijah. To remove a land-mark was denounced by Moses as an act highly criminal.

Much attention was paid among the Hebrews to the improvement of the soil by irrigation, and the admixture of compost. Vestiges of the indus-

* Lev. xxv. 8.

try employed upon it still remain, in the artificial terraces which circle the hills, and adorn the mountain summits of the Holy Land. One of the most remarkable provisions of the Mosaic law has been thought to aim at the continuance of fertility in the soil, by causing it at regular intervals to lie fallow. Every seventh year was one of rest, a sabbath year, during which the cultivation of the earth was forbidden. That which grew of itself might be gathered; but even this was not the exclusive property of the agriculturist. It was for the poor, and for the stranger, and for the beasts of the field. The blessing of Providence was promised upon the land during the sixth year, that sufficient stores might be furnished to supply their necessities until the first harvest after the seventh. Before the captivity, the observance of the Sabbatical year was much neglected; and hence the land was said during the captivity to *enjoy her sabbaths*; "for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath." * The succession of seven Sabbatical years brought round the Jubilee, which consequently always took place upon a year of this description. The jubilee was therefore, according to our mode of

* 2 Chronicles, xxxvi. 21.

reckoning, the forty-ninth year; though the Hebrews, including the last preceding jubilee in their calculation, call it the fiftieth.

The season for sowing in the Holy Land comprises the greater part of October, November, and December; with barley, it continues to the middle of February. The plough among the Hebrews was, originally, constructed rudely, but in the same general form which has been in use almost everywhere. The ploughman held a staff armed with iron, for the double purpose of clearing the share from obstructions, and of urging forward the oxen. Such an ox-goad in the hands of Shamgar, proved a formidable weapon.* The harrow, at least at an early period, was a log, borne down by a weight, or by a man seated upon it. Wagons and carts were in use, which now, in the same regions, are unknown. About the time of harvest the fields were watched by persons seated in a sort of tower made for the purpose, or on some natural elevation. The time of harvest, continuing from the Passover to the Pentecost, was a season of rejoicing. Old and young, master and servant, joined in its toils and its hilarity. The harvesters were prohibited from reaping thorough-

* Judges, iii. 31.

ly the corners of the fields, and from going over the whole a second time, to glean what might have been left. This was the privilege of the poor, that they might have a share in the general rejoicing of the season. The bundles of wheat were taken to the threshing-floor: this was a circular enclosure, where the grain was either trodden out by cattle, or beaten out with staves, or by machines. These machines consisted usually of a frame, enclosing three revolving cylinders furnished with iron teeth. This was drawn by oxen over the wheat, the driver being seated in the machine itself, and another man following to arrange the broken grain. The law forbade the husbandman to muzzle the ox that trode out the corn. The situation of the threshing-floor was elevated, so that the wind had free access to it; and when the threshing was ended, the grain was turned over with a fork, that the chaff and broken straw might be blown away. The operation of treading it out was repeated, and the grain again winnowed by means of a fan. The chaff was finally consumed by fire, the grain deposited in storehouses.

Vineyards were, as at the present day, planted on the declivity of hills. The vines were generally supported either by trees, or more artificial

props. In the vineyards, watchtowers were erected. The vintage, which took place in August, September, and October, was an occasion of great rejoicing. The wine-press consisted of two excavations, or vats, communicating together: in the upper of the two the grapes were placed, and trodden down usually by five men: the juice flowed out into the lower receptacle. Gardening was carried to great perfection.

Of the state of the Arts in general among the Israelites, some idea may be formed from the accounts already given of their structures and utensils for sacred purposes, even in very early times. It is obvious that in the age of Moses, no slight progress had been made in the arts of working in gold, silver, brass, and stone; in carpentry, weaving, and embroidery. That the art of writing was in use at a still earlier period is evident from the structure of the book of Genesis, in the compilation of which the lawgiver evidently had before him written documents of high antiquity. Of the gradual progress of the arts in later times our information is scanty. In the early part of the reign of Saul, all the smiths in the kingdom had been carried captive by the Philistines, lest they should manufacture arms for the Hebrews.* In

* 1 Sam. xiii. 19.

the magnificent works undertaken by Solomon, Tyrian artists were employed to direct the labor of the less skilful Israelites. After the captivity, the arts were probably more extensively pursued. According to the Talmudists, it was the duty of every parent, whatever might be his station, to teach his children some species of manual labor; and accordingly we find Paul, who had evidently received the highest advantages of education, working for his support in the occupation of a tent-maker.*

The materials for writing, in ancient times, were various. Among them were the bark and the leaves of trees, the sand of the earth, linen and cotton cloth, tiles, parchment, and paper manufactured from the reed papyrus, whence its name originated. Among the Israelites, in the earlier period of their history, tables of wood, lead, brass, or stone appear to have been chiefly used. The letters were engraved or written upon these, according to the nature of the substance. When written, the instrument used was a small brush, or a pen made of a reed. Among the Romans, the wooden tablets were coated with wax, on which the letters were traced

* Acts, xviii. 3.

with a pointed style ; but in Palestine, where, from the warmth of the climate, such writing would be too easily obliterated, the words were written or painted directly upon the wood. Books were formed either by tying together numerous tablets ; or, if written on parchment or any other flexible substance, as many sheets as were necessary to form the book were connected, and rolled round a short staff attached to one end. Sometimes two such staves were used. The writing was arranged in columns, the lines being of moderate length ; the reader held the roll in his left hand, and gradually opened it with his right, as he advanced from right to left, such being the order of the letters in Hebrew writing. The Hebrew language does not possess the distinction between common and capital letters, and the words were anciently written without intervals or stops of any kind, except that some of the letters were written in a varied form when they occurred at the end of words. In epistolary writing, the same variety of materials was employed. Letters were sometimes tied with a string and sealed ; in other instances they were sent open ; and when peculiar honor was intended to be shown, the letter was placed in a valuable purse, which was then tied up and sealed. The name of the person writing

was placed at the beginning, in connexion with the name of the person addressed. Paul was accustomed to authenticate his letters by a few words of benediction written with his own hand at the close, the rest being generally dictated by him to a friend who acted as his scribe.*

We find in the Old Testament, the names of many musical instruments; but difficulties present themselves in ascertaining their precise nature. The harp appears to have varied in the number of its strings from three to ten. It was in the form of a triangle, resting on its base. Another species, called the nabel or psaltery, was nearly similar in form, except that the point of the triangle was downwards. It is uncertain whether these instruments were commonly played upon by means of a bow, or by the fingers: both methods were probably in use. The instrument called in the English Bible the organ, was nothing more than the Syrix or Pan's pipe, composed of reeds of different lengths. It has been supposed that the cymbals, so styled in our version, were the Egyptian sistrum, an oval frame crossed by brass wires, which hung loosely, and gave a ring-

* 2 Thess. iii. 17, 18. 1 Cor. xvi. 21 - 24. Rom. xvi. 22.

ing sound when shaken. Among other instruments were the shalishim or triangle, furnished with rings hanging loosely ; and the mezilothaim, supposed to have been a species of bells. Various kinds of trumpets, flutes, and drums were employed. In vocal music, the correspondence of the different parts, which constitutes harmony, was unknown to the Hebrews, as well as to the ancients generally.

We have reason to believe that the arts of painting and sculpture never received much attention among the Israelites. Mention is made occasionally of the carved work of the temple ; and on that holy structure, art seems to have lavished her efforts ; but, as far as we can judge, the splendor of the sacred edifice was rather produced by the blaze of gold exhibited on every side, than by remarkable ingenuity or taste in the design of the holy utensils. Architecture, however, necessarily received some attention ; and, if we may judge from the edifices of which we know most, the temple and the buildings erected by Herod in Jerusalem, the Hebrew style in this art was marked by loftiness and splendor, though perhaps to the occasional neglect of symmetry and simple beauty.

The subject of the fine arts cannot be relinquished without a few words on the literary character of the Israelites. The writings which have come down to us from the ancient inhabitants of Judea, exhibit every where the marks of the peculiar relation in which that people stood to the Eternal Father. All that is left us of their literature is comprised in the Scriptures; the Apocrypha; the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases; the works of Philo and Josephus; and such portions of the Talmud as comprise the traditional sayings of those rabbis who lived before the destruction of Jerusalem. In other words, all their literature which has not itself been revered as inspired, has with scarce an exception been devoted to the illustration of the sacred books, or of the national history. Yet were the Hebrews not destitute of fancy. Theirs was of a grand and serious cast. Very few passages in their writings exhibit anything of that quality, to which moderns have confined the name of wit; but in the higher regions of poetry, in the sublime, the beautiful, the tender, the terrific, the sacred writers of the Old Testament have never been equalled. A large portion of the Hebrew Scriptures is poetical in its character, comprehending the books of Psalms and Proverbs, the

Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and Job ; with many parts of the prophetical writings, and occasional passages in the historical books. How far the poets employed rhythmical cadence in their compositions, and whether there were among them different kinds of metre distinctly marked, are questions which can perhaps never be fully settled ; as the true pronounciation of the language is in a great measure lost. One distinguishing peculiarity remains, however, perceptible even through the disguise of a translation. This is a correspondence in meaning between the successive parts of a sentence naturally producing a correspondence in emphasis and cadence. Either a thought, having been expressed, is repeated in a different form, — as in the sentences

“ May Jehovah hear thee in the day of trouble ;
May the name of the God of Jacob defend thee !
May he send thee help from his sanctuary,
And strengthen thee out of Zion ! ”

Psalms, xx. 1, 2.

or another thought is brought into contrast with it ; as in the lines

“ Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked leadeth to ruin.”

Psalms, i. 6.

Sometimes this *parallelism*, as it is styled, is less perfect, existing merely in the rhythmical arrangement of the words; as,

“How many are they who say of me,
There is no help for him with God!”

Psalms, iii. 3.

Triple parallelisms are not uncommon, and occasionally the thought is extended through four members. In some cases it appears, from the structure of the verses and the nature of the subject, that the psalms were sung by alternate choirs; as in the 136th, where the chorus, “For his mercy endureth for ever,” occurs as the regular parallel to each sentiment of the psalm. Thus, in the earliest period of the Hebrew nation, the triumphal song of Moses on the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea was responded to by Miriam with the chorus of females, in the words, “Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” *

In poetical composition, some methods of ornament were in use among the Hebrews, which are seldom or never employed by modern writers:

* Exodus, xvi. 20, 21.

Such is the arrangement so carefully introduced into what are called the alphabetical psalms. In the 111th psalm, for instance, the first clause begins with the letter Aleph, the first of the Hebrew alphabet; the second clause, or the parallel of the first verse, with Beth, the second letter; Gimel commences the third clause; and Daleth the fourth; so that the whole psalm exhibits, in the first letters of its lines, the whole Hebrew alphabet, in its regular order. The 119th psalm is divided into twenty-two sections of eight verses each; in the first section every verse begins with Aleph; in the second, every verse begins with Beth; and thus in regular order through the twenty-two letters. Another favorite ornament of the Hebrew poets is an adaptation of the sound of words, or paranomasia, introduced sometimes in the most elevated connexion. A fine instance of this occurs in Isaiah, v. 7. "He looked for *judgment*, but behold *oppression*; for *righteousness*, but behold a *cry*;" in Hebrew, "Vayekav le-mishpat vehinne mispah, le-zedakah vehinne zeakah." But it is not in such fancies as these that the beauty of Hebrew poetry consists. It is the poetry of deep and pure religious feeling, elevated by the sublime intercourse with the Deity, which was accorded to the writers. Truth, the

great truth of the existence throughout nature of One Infinite, Immutable, All-sustaining, and All-gracious Spirit,—this it was, which gave to Moses and David, to Asaph and Isaiah, a loftiness of conception which later poets have never equalled.

We cannot leave this subject without a few words on some terms, used chiefly in the book of Psalms, and of which the meaning is but little known. The title, "Psalm of degrees," has been often explained with reference to the visits of the people to the temple, at the great annual feasts. It has been supposed that on such occasions these psalms were sung; and on that account received the name, psalms of degrees, of steps, or of processions. Another explanation, perhaps more probable, supposes the "steps" referred to, to be metrical feet; a use of the term which has been observed in the poetry of the Syrians; so that the name might be rendered, "psalms of regular measure." The term *Maschil* signifies didactic, instructive. *Michtam* has been translated "golden," but has more probably the same meaning with *Michtab*, a poem, or written song. What species of song was designated by the term *Shiggaion*, is exceedingly uncertain. *Selah* appears to be a musical direction; but of what nature we are uninformed.

Of the progress of the Hebrews in the natural sciences, previous to the captivity, little can now be known. Solomon, we are informed, wrote treatises upon various branches of natural history. "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes."* In astronomy some progress was evidently made, since the year was at a very early period divided into lunar months. The Israelites probably acquired some knowledge in this department, from their long sojourn in Egypt, which, next to Chaldea, was distinguished for astronomical information. The constellations appear to have been early distinguished by names, some of which are given in Scripture.† The pursuit of astrology, as of other species of divination, was prohibited to the Hebrews. In the division of time, they always reckoned the astronomical day, or period of alternate light and darkness, as extending from sunset to sunset; an inaccurate method, since the time of sunset changes from day to day. The

* 1 Kings, iv. 33.

† Job, ix. 9; xxxviii. 31, 32; Is. xiii. 10; Amos, v. 8; 2 Kings, xxiii. 5.

night was divided into three watches, extending respectively from evening to midnight, from midnight to cock-crowing, and thence to sunrise. In later times, the measurement by hours was introduced, the natural day, whatever its length might be, being divided into twelve. Of course the length of the hours varied at different seasons. The calculation commenced at sunrise, and closed at sunset. The sixth hour consequently was noon; and the third and ninth were respectively the middle of the morning and of the afternoon. This point is worthy of notice, as illustrative of various passages of Scripture.* The hours were, as early as the time of Hezekiah, measured by a dial, which, from its being styled "the sun-dial of Ahaz," was probably obtained by that monarch from his Assyrian or Babylonian allies.†

The division of time into months originated from observing the changes of the moon. These changes designate a period of nearly thirty days, and of this length were the months of the Hebrews. But since twelve such months would fall short of a full year, it was necessary occasionally

* Mark xv. 33; Acts ii. xv.

† 2 Kings, xx. 9-11, compared with xvi. 7-10.

to introduce a thirteenth or intercalary month. The law which obliged the priests to offer in the temple a ripe sheaf on the second day of the passover, compelled attention to this subject, as it fixed the period of the natural year at which that festival was to take place. The months were reckoned among the Hebrews, either from the beginning of Tishri, the first new moon in October, or from the beginning of Abib, the first new moon of April. The former calculation, which was the more ancient, regulated the political year; the latter, instituted by Moses on occasion of the Israelites leaving Egypt, regulated the sacred year. The months in their succession were as follows.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Nisan, or Abib, | 7. Tishri, |
| 2. Zif, or Ijar, | 8. Bul, or Marheshvan, |
| 3. Sivan, | 9. Kisleu, |
| 4. Tammuz, | 10. Tebeth, |
| 5. Ab, , | 11. Shebat, |
| 6. Elul, | 12. Adar. |

The intercalary month when inserted, followed Adar, under the name Ve-adar, literally "and Adar, signifying that Adar was repeated.

No study was pursued with more diligence among the Hebrews, than that of genealogy. It was indeed of the deepest importance to every Israelite,

that he should be able to trace his descent from the head of his tribe, and from the ancestor to whom his present possessions had first been granted. The officers who were employed in taking the census for military enrolments, are supposed, from the probable derivation of their title, to have been public genealogists. As among the Israelites, the custom of family surnames did not exist, an individual was frequently designated by the name of his father added to his own, with the prefix *ben*, signifying son, as David ben-Jesse. In the New Testament we meet instead with the Syrian prefix *bar*, of the same signification; in the names for instance, of Simon bar-Jona, blind bar-Timeus, the son of Timeus, the sorcerer Elymas bar-Jesus. The same mode of designation was adopted by the later Jews, and is commonly employed in reference to the rabbins; as Rabbi Aaron Ben Asher, and Jacob Ben Naphtali, the two learned men who in the eleventh century set the example of a comparison of Hebrew manuscripts, for the purpose of ascertaining the genuine text of the Scriptures. In modern usage, this form of expression is sometimes translated; thus the celebrated R. Moses ben-Maimon is more generally designated by the classical patronymic of Maimonides; and the Jewish phi-

losopher of the last century, R. Moses ben Mendel, is better known by the German name of Mendelsohn.

From the fact that, under Joshua, a general survey and distribution of Palestine took place, it would appear that in that early age, no trifling advancement had been made in practical geometry. Little else is known of the mathematical knowledge existing among the Hebrews; nor is it probable that they ever, while existing as an independent nation, made attainments of any great extent in the exact sciences.

The healing art was among the Hebrews, as with other ancient nations, exercised chiefly by the priests. They were designated by the law to judge concerning the symptoms of leprosy. We find music judiciously employed to alleviate the mental disorder of Saul.* It has been conjectured, from the censure cast on king Asa, because "in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians,"† that physicians in his day employed charms and spells, of fancied efficacy, and the use of which was forbidden by the Mosaic law.

Learned men, among the more modern Jews,

* 1 Sam. xvi. 23.

† 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

were, it is well known, designated by the title Rabbi, or master. More anciently they bore that of Hacham or wise. In the time of Christ the names scribe and rabbi were promiscuously given to such persons. Seven of the sages of their nation are designated among the Jews by the superior title of Rabban. Among these is Gamaliel, the teacher of St. Paul. These learned men, however, in speaking of themselves, used the more modest title of "children of wisdom." They were restricted by custom from holding any general conversation with women, or with the lower classes of society. This fact throws light on those passages of the New Testament, in which it is stated that our Saviour excited surprise by his condescending intercourse with persons generally regarded as inferior, — as with the woman of Samaria, with the guilty female at the house of Simon; and more than once with publicans and sinners. Certain forms accompanied the reception of a member to the rabbinical body; which have been compared, not unaptly, to the conferring of an academical degree.

On the return of the Jews from Babylon, the purity of their ancient language was well nigh lost. The people had to a great extent adopted the Chaldee, the language of their conquerors;

a language of kindred origin to their own. The Hebrew was still cultivated by the learned, and it continued to be in general the language of the prophets and historians who wrote about that period; though by many, Chaldee phrases were introduced, and some, as Daniel and Ezra, wrote large portions of their books in that language. The tendency to alteration increased by the intercourse of the Jews with their Persian and Syro-Grecian neighbours; so that in the time of our Saviour the Hebrew was a dead language, and the vernacular tongue of Palestine was a dialect compounded of the Hebrew and Chaldee.

At a period not much subsequent to the captivity, the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament were compiled, to meet the wants of the people, to whom their ancient books had become in a great measure unintelligible. The most ancient and the best now extant is that of Onkelos on the Pentateuch. These, with the Talmuds, of the formation of which an account has already been given, and with the works of Philo and Josephus, constitute, with the exception of the Holy Scriptures, the most ancient treasures of Jewish learning. Of Josephus, some account has already been given. Philo, a Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, wrote in Greek, soon after the birth of our Saviour.

His writings are important from the information they convey respecting the philosophical systems prevalent in his time.

Nor have the modern Jews been destitute of able and learned leaders, and defenders of their faith, against the attacks of the deist on the one side, and the arguments of Christian divines on the other. The *Chizzuk Emunah*, or *Buttress of the Faith*, was composed by R. Isaac ben Abraham, against the followers of Luther. The *Sepher Nithsachun*, or *Book of Irrefutable arguments*, by R. Lipman, comes next in order of time. Saul Levi Mortera, and Isaac Orobio de Castro, wrote in Spanish. The latter became generally known to the Christian world, by his controversy with the celebrated Limborch. He fell a victim to the tyranny of the inquisition, at Lisbon. David Levi, known by his correspondence with Priestley, closes the list of distinguished Jewish polemics of former years; while the truly illustrious Moses Mendelsohn has left behind him an example of genius struggling with success against poverty, disease, and the unreasonable prejudices of the world.

CHAPTER XII.

DOMESTIC ANTIQUITIES.

"How the dim visions throng the soul,
 When twilight broods upon thy waste !
 The clouds of wo from o'er thee roll ;
 Thy glory seems replaced.
 The stir of life is brightening round ;
 Thy structures swell upon the eye,
 And mirth and revelry resound
 In triumph to the sky.

* * *

"The sad, the gay, the old, the young,
 The warrior's strength and beauty's glow,
 Resolved to that from which they sprung,
 Compose the dust below."

F. S. Eckhard.

THE earlier records of the Old Testament place before us mankind in the nomadic or wandering state, in which the patriarchs lived, and in which a large portion of the Arabian tribes yet remain. The first dwellings were in caves; and we are informed by travellers that in the mountainous

country east of the Dead Sea, this mode of life is still extensively prevalent. Hence the name of Horites, mountaineers. Where these natural dwellings were less common, or had been found by experience to be inconvenient, booths were erected, of branches fixed in the ground, and woven together. In such booths, erected in their streets or on the flat roofs of their houses, the Israelites lived during the feast of Tabernacles, in commemoration of their ancient wanderings. To the booths succeeded tents, still in use among the Arabs. They support the covering by upright poles, of which the longest are placed in the middle, the others at the sides. They are covered with a dark cloth woven of goats' hair; and, arranged in a circle, with the tent of the sheikh or emir in the centre, present a picturesque appearance. "I am black, but comely," says the bride in the Song of Songs, "as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."* Within the circle, the flocks and herds are driven for safety during the night. The tent has usually three apartments, separated by curtains. The outer is occupied by the servants, the innermost by the females of the family. The tents of the wealthy are some-

* i. 5.

times richly furnished. As late as the period of the captivity, we find a race of men dwelling in tents among the Israelites; these were the Rechabites, supposed to have been descended from Jethro or Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses. Heber, the Kenite, at an earlier period, was of the same family, and pursued a similar mode of life, in the same relation of amity with the Israelites among whom he dwelt.*

The Hebrews however, after acquiring possession of the land, did not continue long to dwell in tents. Houses were soon erected; and before long, many of them attained to no small degree of elegance and comfort. The arrangement of oriental houses appears to have been in ancient times similar to what it is at present, those of large size being always built round a central court. Passing through a vestibule, the visiter enters the court, open above, and furnished on one side at least with a covered walk; over which, if the house has more than one story, is a gallery to which the ascent is from the vestibule. In the court, on great occasions, company is received; and at such times an awning is drawn over it to exclude the heat of the sun. To such a covering

* Jer. xxxv. Judges, iv. 11. 1 Chr. ii. 55. 2 Kings, x. 15.

perhaps, reference is made in the expression "who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain."* Beyond the court are the apartments of the women. The roof is flat and formed of earth, or of a composition of ashes, chalk, and similar substances. These roofs are, in the mild climate of Syria, much resorted to. Here they sleep during summer, and here frequently they retire for privacy, conference, or devotion. Sometimes booths or tents are placed there, and the idolatrous kings of Judah erected altars on the roofs of their palaces.† The law of Moses required of every Israelite the erection of a parapet around his roof, lest any one should incur the danger of falling from thence. Where houses adjoined each other, the railing was low, and admitted of easy communication between the roofs of the different mansions. When the paralytic was brought to our Saviour to be cured, the bearers undoubtedly let down their burthen into the central court, — but whether they merely removed the awning, or were obliged to demolish a part of the parapet, is difficult to determine.‡ The chambers surrounded the court, and were

* Psalm civ. 2.

† 2 Kings, xxiii. 12. Jer. xix. 13.

‡ Matt. ix. 1–8. Mark, ii. 1–12. Luke, v. 17.

entered, either from it directly, or from its galleries. These chambers in eastern houses are generally spacious, lighted either from the court itself, or from the rear of the house, looking towards the gardens. The front of the dwelling exhibits no aperture, except the door, and perhaps a single window. This is furnished with a balcony, but closely latticed, and never opened except on occasions of public festivity. To the other windows, opening upon the court and gardens, lattices and curtains supply the place of glass. The nails sustaining the curtain rods were generally ornamental, and are hence spoken of as illustrative of strength and beauty.*

In palaces and large houses, there is frequently a hall of audience, projecting into the central court from the side opposite to the entrance. This apartment is commonly open in front, the roof being in that part supported only by two pillars. Such was the hall of audience in the palace of Ahasuerus; as appears from the account that Esther, when appearing before the king, "stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house; and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the

* Isaiah, xxii. 23. Zech. x. 4. Eccles. xii. 11.

gate of the house." * Such perhaps was the hall in the house of Caiaphas, where our Saviour was examined before the Sanhedrin had convened; since, while standing there, he "turned and looked upon Peter," who was standing in the outer hall of entrance.† The construction of Dagon's temple is supposed to have been similar, as this affords the best explanation how any considerable portion of such an edifice could have been upheld only by the two pillars which Samson overthrew.‡

It is not uncommon in the East to find additional apartments constructed, turrets or kiosks, having but slight communication with the rest of the house, and sometimes projecting a story above the principal building. Such was the "chamber on the wall," which the woman of Shunem caused to be constructed for Elisha.§

Apartments were warmed in ancient times by fires kindled in a vessel placed in the centre of the floor. The smoke escaped through the windows, or through some opening left for the purpose in the wall. Such an opening is the "chimney," mentioned in Hosea, xiii. 3.

* Esther, v. 1.

† Matt. xxvi. 69. Luke, xxii. 61.

‡ Judges, xvi. 26.

§ 2 Kings, iv. 10.

The Hebrews had sometimes separate houses for summer use, large and facing the north. Their courts were paved with marble, and sometimes adorned with fountains. They were ventilated either by openings contrived for that purpose in the upper part of the wall, or by a tower over the centre of the roof, open to the north, and so constructed as to transmit below the cooling winds which blew from that direction. This construction, still common in the East, is referred to in the poem of Lalla Rookh.

"The wind-tower on the Emir's dome
Can scarcely win a breath from heaven."

Doors were suspended by means of pivots which projected from them above and below, and turned in sockets in the door frame. They were secured sometimes by bars, sometimes by a lock. This was a bolt or latch of wood, which entered into a hole cut in the door-post, and was secured there by a catch. To open the door, the bolt must of course be raised up and drawn back. It was raised from without by a wooden key, and drawn backwards or forwards by strings which passed through apertures in the door.

Wood, earth, stone, and brick, the last either sun-dried or burnt in kilns, were employed as

materials for building in Palestine. Stone, from its abundance, was much used in every species of edifice, from the hovel to the palace. Care was taken, in the construction of sumptuous buildings, to provide stones of great size, "stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits." * The corner-stone especially, the first that was laid in the construction of the house, was an object of interest, and is often referred to in Scripture. Large stones appear to have been united by cramp-irons, bricks originally by wet clay, for which mortar was afterwards substituted. Plaster for the interior of houses was commonly employed, even in the time of Moses. Wainscoting of wood, however, was frequent, and was regarded as more sumptuous. To the buildings finished in this style, the terms "ceiled houses," and "ceiled chambers" were applied. Thus Jeremiah, describing a splendid mansion, says, "It is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion." † Figures in stucco, ivory, and precious stones and metals were employed in their decoration. The sycamore, the acacia, the fir, the palm, the olive, and the cedar, were highly valued for building; but the wood most prized was the almug, brought

* 1 Kings, vii. 10.

† Jer. xxii. 14.

from southern Asia or Africa, by the ships of Solomon. The supposition best supported by the etymology of the word, identifies this with the *Cæsalpinia*, or Brazil wood, highly valued as a material in cabinet work, and of a color resembling coral.

The floors of oriental houses are covered, as among us, with mats and carpets. Instead of chairs, a portion of the floor is raised, round three sides of the room, to the height of about nine inches, and three feet broad. This divan, as it is called, is cushioned, and against the wall are placed bolsters. Here the family sit, in a posture which, though unusual with us, must, with the flowing robes of orientlists, be far from ungraceful. The corner of the divan is the most honorable, as well as the most luxurious seat, as the bolsters there not only offer a support to the back, but permit the occupant to recline on the side nearest the wall. Here the richest cushions are always placed. Sofas or settees, six feet in length, movable, but of the same height and breadth with the divan, and furnished in a similar manner, were also used among the Hebrews, both as seats, and for the purpose of sleeping. As, in sitting, the feet were placed on the cushioned divan, the shoes and sandals used in walking were left at

the door of the apartment. The exposure of the feet was as common and as little indelicate, as the exposure of the hands among ourselves. Hence the practice, so often referred to, of washing the feet of guests on their entrance into a house.

The orientals have always been remarkable for the peculiar attention to ceremony displayed in their salutations. The greeting of friends, even among us, implies a blessing; but among the ancient Hebrews, this meaning was much more distinctly expressed. The most common form was in the words "shalom alekha," the same with the "salam aleikoum" of the modern Arabs, and having the same meaning, "Peace be with you." Not unfrequently the expression was varied, "May God be with you," or "The blessing of Jehovah be upon you." What gestures of the body accompanied these salutations, we may judge in part from the great degree of ceremony now employed in the East, and from the primitive meaning of the Hebrew words used to express such acts of courtesy. To bow the head or the body, to bend the knee, and even to fall prostrate on the earth, were customary, according to the respective rank of the parties. That salutation was a task sufficiently complicated to interpose a delay inconvenient when haste was

required, we may judge from our Saviour's charge to his apostles, to "salute no man by the way."* A similar charge had been given by Elisha to his servant Gehazi, in an affair of pressing importance.†

In visiting, as well as in salutation, more of ceremony appears to have been observed, among the Hebrews, than is common with modern western nations. Rarely, it would seem, was a visit of form made, without a present being offered by the visiter. When a king or distinguished man received the compliment, it was usual for him to bestow presents in turn; these were commonly robes of honor, in which it was expected that the guests should immediately clothe themselves. The custom was similar, when a feast was given by a person in high authority. Hence the allusion to the wedding garment in our Saviour's parable, where the guests had been collected from the highways, and therefore could not have been clothed with ceremonious propriety unless they had received robes after entering the palace.‡ It was usual in receiving guests, to bring water for their feet, to anoint their heads, and to regale

* Luke, x. 4.

† 2 Kings, iv. 29.

‡ Matt. xxii. 11, 12.

them with perfumes. The last mentioned is still the parting compliment in the East, and the introduction of the perfumes is consequently a hint to the visiter that he is expected soon to retire.

Conversation, among the modern orientals, is not regarded as so necessary to the enjoyment of a circle, as among ourselves. Among the Israelites there appears to have been more taste for intercourse of this kind. Beside their visits, they met each other at various places of resort, especially the gates of the cities, where, in the numbers collected and the causes which were tried there, subjects of interesting remark were continually presented. When one wished to close a conversation which was becoming disagreeable, the form of expression used appears to have been, "It is enough." Thus, when the disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, behold, here are are two swords," our Saviour, finding that his advice, figuratively expressed, to prepare for every emergency, had been understood literally as a direction to procure destructive weapons, dismissed the subject with the words "It is enough."* The form of assent was commonly, "Thou sayest," — or to translate the words more freely, "It is as

* Luke, xxii. 38.

you say." The answers of our Saviour to the interrogatories of Caiaphas and of Pilate, whether he claimed to be the Son of God, and a king, were therefore affirmative.*

Of materials for clothing, cotton was most esteemed among the Israelites; silk not having been known among them, except perhaps as a royal dress, during their dependence on the Persians. The colors most admired were, white for cotton; purple, from the blood of a shell-fish, the sea-muscle; scarlet, from a worm; and hyacinth, or dark blue, from a species of the snail. The purple was the dye in which the Tyrians excelled. Variegated cloths were held in estimation, and black was used not only on occasions of mourning, but for common wear. Cloths were embroidered as early as the time of Moses. That legislator prohibited to his people the use of one species of cloth, formed of linen and wool woven together. The reason of the prohibition does not now appear, but might probably be drawn from some use of this peculiar fabric with which heathen superstitions had been connected. Coarse garments of hair-cloth were worn by the poor, and the prophets generally assumed a similar

* Matt. xxvi. 64; xxvii. 11.

dress, or clothed themselves in sack-cloth, the coarse fabric usually worn by mourners. There were, however, soft and costly garments made of hair, and used by princes, and men of the highest rank.

The most simple, and most important garment among the Israelites, was the tunic, or "coat," a loose vest, descending to the knees and bound with a broad girdle. Over this was thrown the upper garment, the *meil*, or "cloak," a piece of cloth about seven feet long and nearly square, wrapped round the body. Sometimes it was worn with the corners, or skirts, hanging over the shoulders; — sometimes it was gathered together, and thrown loosely over the left shoulder. This garment answered to the poor, the purpose of a covering by night as well as by day. It was forbidden, therefore, by the Mosaic law, that he who took the upper garment in pledge should retain it during the night.* This illustrates the precept of our Saviour, who, enforcing on his disciples the propriety under their circumstances of submitting to oppression, commanded them, if the tunic was taken, to surrender with it even the upper garment, which the law expressly spared.† On the

* Exodus, xii. 26.

† Matt. v. 40.

corners of this garment there was a fringe, prescribed in the law, to be worn as a continual memorial of the obligations of the people to their God. The upper garment was that which our Saviour laid aside, when, at the last supper, he washed the feet of his disciples.* This, at his crucifixion, was divided in four parts by the soldiers. His tunic, woven in a single piece, was disposed of among them by lot.

We can derive little information from Scripture, relative to the usual covering for the head among the Israelites. The hats mentioned by Daniel, among the clothing of his companions at the Babylonian court, appear, from the version of the Alexandrine interpreters, to have been tiaras, similar to those worn among the Persians.† In early times a portion of the long upper garment was probably thrown over the head as a defence in inclement weather, and the same was customary as a sign of mourning. Thus David and his followers, when retreating from Absalom, went with their heads covered.‡ Contrary to the custom among ourselves, the head was covered in token of subjection, as by a servant in the pres-

* John, xiii. 4.

† Daniel, iii. 21.

‡ 2 Sam. xv. 30; see also Jer. xiv. 3, 4.

ence of his master. Thus St. Paul denominates the covering worn by females in the Christian assemblies, "power," regarding it as a token of subjection to the authority of the husband. The necessity of wearing this veil he urges, on account of the heathen spies or messengers (translated "angels" in our common version) who were ready to observe and take advantage of the least impropriety among the Christians.* In the later ages of the Jewish state, a variety of mitres and turbans were introduced. The feet were protected in walking by sandals, covering the soles, and bound on with leather thongs; on entering a house these were laid aside.

The beard has always been much regarded among the orientals, and any injury done to it is an offence of the most unpardonable kind. The occasion of David's war with the Ammonites proves that the case was the same among the Hebrews.† A particular manner of forming the beard, common among neighbouring nations, and connected with superstitious observances, was interdicted to the Israelites.‡ Those who assumed the vow of a Nazarite were prohibited alto-

* 1 Cor. xi. 10.

† 2 Sam x. 4-19.

‡ Lev. xix. 27.

gether from cutting the beard or hair, until the period of their engagement was completed.

The dress of women was distinguished by superior fineness in the materials, and by concealing more effectually the person. Of veils there were many kinds, and in constant use; and the Jewish women, though less secluded than oriental ladies at the present day, never appeared unveiled before any except near relatives or their own domestics. Among the ornaments common among them may be classed most of those still in use, and some decorations which are now less known. Such were the amulets of precious metals or jewels, to which magical efficacy was ascribed by superstition, while they displayed the taste and wealth of the wearer. In Jacob's family the earrings, which he took from them at Shechem, appear to have been amulets.* Among other ornaments were mirrors of polished brass, carried in the hand; necklaces, of which three were commonly worn, with a box of perfume suspended from the lowest; jewels, pendent not from the ears only, but from the nose; rings, worn in numbers upon the fingers, and decorating also the wrists and even the ankles. In the last

* Gen. xxxv. 2-4.

case, the two rings were sometimes united by a chain. Half-moons, of silver and gold, are also to be mentioned ; together with the purse, a hollow cone of metal suspended from the girdle. An ornament now common in the East has been thought to illustrate some passages of Scripture where the horn is referred to as an emblem of power.* This ornament is a horn of silver or other metal, resting against the forehead. The custom, still practised in the East, of giving a darker tint to the eyebrows, and increasing their apparent length, by means of a black dye, was known among the ladies of Israel ; and Jezabel, on Jehu's entrance into Jezreel, " painted her face and tired her head." †

Among the men, the use of a staff, not only in travelling but for ornament, was prevalent, as in later times. The seal, which was used from a very early period, was suspended from the neck, or worn as a ring. It bore the name of the owner, and sometimes a motto. In idolatrous nations, it was common for the votaries of any particular deity, to have either his name or the image of his temple stamped upon them. Hence the allusion

* Psalm lxxv. 5, 10.

† 2 Kings, ix. 30.

in the Revelation, where the servants of God are represented as sealed in their foreheads.*

The napkin, sometimes of costly materials, was carried by both sexes on the hand or left arm, or attached to the girdle.

We now enter the banquet-hall and observe its arrangements. We discover three tables, disposed in such a manner as to form three sides of a parallelogram; around these, on the outer side, are placed couches, or raised mattresses, one to each table, and five or six feet wide. On these the guests reclined, resting each upon his left arm, so that it would require but a slight bending of the body backwards for any one to bring his head near the breast of the person next him. The most honorable seat among the Greeks, was at the right extremity of the table; but it seems probable that with the Hebrews, the left was the place of honor, analogous to the customs of the Turks and Chinese. The couches among the Romans were of such a size as to accommodate three each; among the Jews the number who reclined together was greater. Of course the number of tables and couches was varied in proportion to the number of guests.

* Rev. vii. 4; see also Gal. vi. 17.

The position of the guests at table, as thus explained, admitted of those marks of veneration paid to Jesus by the woman in the house of Simon, who "brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment." * Thus, too, our Saviour, when at the last supper he washed the feet of the disciples, passed round behind the couches on which they lay; while they, in receiving from his hand this service, did not change the position in which they were arranged at the table.

The tables and couches above described were of course, articles too costly to have been in use among all classes of society, especially at an early period. It is probable that among great numbers the mode in partaking of a meal was nearly the same with that described by modern travellers, as still existing in Syria, where the table is nothing more than a small stool, placed upon a cloth, or a round piece of leather. On the stool is placed a tray, containing the dishes in which the viands are served. Around this

* Luke, vii. 37, 38.

table the family are seated on the floor; a long napkin passes round the circle, and is laid on the laps of the company; or where this is not the case, each makes use of one which is constantly carried for the purpose. Plates, knives, and forks are not used, and spoons not always; but the hands of all are dipped into the common vessel; a practice less disagreeable than might be supposed, in consequence of the scrupulous attention paid by the Asiatics to the duty of frequent ablution. The habits of the Israelites were similar; thus it was customary in the time of Christ, to have on the table a vessel of condiment or sauce, into which each at pleasure dipped his piece of bread; and it is now, as it was then, an act of courtesy, to pass to another a favorite morsel. So our Lord, "when he had dipped the sop, gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon." *

The principal meal of the Israelites, as of the Greeks and Romans, was in the evening. They partook, an hour or two before noon, of a slight repast, of bread, milk, cheese, and fruits. Their feasts were introduced and closed with a short benediction for the gifts bestowed.

Grain was, in every period of the Hebrew state,

* John xiii. 26.

ground by hand-mills, according to the wants of each family. The mill consisted of two stones, the lower one immovable, and having a slight elevation in the centre, to fit a corresponding cavity in the other. The upper millstone had a hole through the middle, by which the grain was poured in; and was turned by a handle inserted in its upper surface. The operation of grinding was performed by two women, who sat with the mill between them, and worked the handle alternately. Hence our Saviour's illustration, to show the suddenness of the danger he foretold: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left."* The use of grain prepared by simply parching it, was by no means uncommon.†

Bread was commonly baked in the form of a cake, about the thickness of a finger. The unleavened cakes, eaten at the passover, were still thinner. We never, therefore, hear of the cutting, but often of the breaking, of bread. It was sometimes baked on the heated ashes, or on a plate of iron, placed over coals. Sometimes an excavation was made in the earth and lined with

* Matt. xxiv. 41.

† Ruth, ii. 14. 1 Sam. xvii. 17.

stones, to answer the purpose of an oven. This was thoroughly heated; after which the fire was taken out, the provisions to be cooked put in, and the mouth of the oven covered over. In this manner sheep and lambs were commonly roasted whole, the animal being supported by two stakes thrust through it, in the form of a cross. There were, also, ovens made of brick, lined with clay. The ordinary diet of the orientals comprises less of animal food than that of most nations in colder climates; among the kinds, however, which they used is one not elsewhere accounted palatable. This is the locust, some species of which are eaten, having been first either roasted, or dried and salted. They constituted in part the common food of John the Baptist.*

The beverage most frequently referred to in Scripture is wine. This was sometimes enriched by mixing with it myrrh and other spices. To such wine allusion is made in several passages.† Elsewhere, however, the mixture appears to have been with water for the purpose of tempering the strength of the wine. The "strong drink" ‡ frequently mentioned, was made of dates, the fruit of

* Matt. iii. 4.

† Psalm lxxv. 8. Prov. xxiii. 30.

‡ Lev. x. 9.

the palm-tree, and was drank usually mixed with water. A cheap and acid wine, often called vinegar, was the common drink of the Roman soldiers. This, mixed with bitter drugs, was frequently given to persons about to be executed, that by its stupefying tendency it might diminish their suffering. Such was the draught offered to Jesus, before his crucifixion. He refused to drink, preferring to die with unclouded faculties, though with far more of pain.* His thirst was afterwards assuaged by a draught of the same beverage, unmixed with the stupefying drugs.†

Liquors were generally kept in bottles made of skins. Such were those referred to in the parable of our Saviour. The skins when new were strong and capable of being expanded by the fermentation of the wine within; while the old bottles, weak, and already stretched to their utmost capacity, were suitable only to contain old wine, in which the process of fermentation had been completed. Jars, urns, cups, and phials of shell or stone were also used.

Hospitality has always been a prevalent trait in the character of the orientals, and it existed in its

* Matt. xxvii. 34, compared with Mark, xv. 23.

† Matt. xxvii. 48.

full extent among the Hebrews, in their intercourse with one another. With strangers, also, especially the Edomites and Egyptians, with whom their own connexion had been peculiar, they were commanded in the law to cultivate friendly intercourse.* Hospitality was enforced on Christians by their divine Master and his apostles; and the command appears to have met a ready observance.†

Among the Hebrews, as in other nations, marriages were occasions of peculiar rejoicing. The contract was made, sometimes in writing, sometimes verbally between the parties or their parents, in the presence of witnesses. No religious ceremony was, at least in primitive times, regarded as of essential importance, though the nuptial blessing was rarely, if ever, omitted. This was pronounced either by the parents, by a rabbi, a Levite, or some one honored for age or station. Contrary to modern customs, the dowry was paid by the bridegroom to his father-in-law; it was also customary that he should make presents to the brothers, or other nearest relations of the bride. The festivities on such occasions continued seven

* Deut. xxiii. 7.

† Matt. xxv. 31 - 46. Heb. xiii. 2.

days, at the house of the bridegroom. During this time, however, eastern ideas of decorum prevented much intercourse between the young persons of different sexes, who were assembled. The young men were entertained by the bridegroom and his attendants, while the bride and her female friends held their festivities in their separate portion of the house. On the first night of the marriage festival, the bride was conducted with rejoicing to the house of her husband. From the parable of the ten virgins* it appears, that as the bridegroom approached with his companions, the bride and her friends went forth to meet him, and the whole party repaired to the house of the bridegroom, where the marriage-supper was served, and the nuptial blessing pronounced.

Among the amusements in use on festival occasions, dancing may be ranked. Sometimes the company themselves engaged in this exercise, even when the occasion was one of religious festivity; † sometimes their gratification consisted in witnessing the graceful motions of accomplished dancers. Thus the daughter of Herodias danced for the amusement of the king and his guests, ‡

* Matt. xxv. 1-13.

† Jer. xxxi. 13.

‡ Matt. xiv. 6.

and thus among the modern orientals, it is customary at an entertainment, to introduce professional dancers, hired for the occasion.

From festivity we turn to mourning;—the changes of real life are sometimes as sudden. On the death of any person, the relatives gave free way to the emotions of grief. The females particularly united in a shrill cry of lamentation, and this was at intervals repeated through several succeeding days. During the time of mourning, which was commonly a week, those connected with the deceased, remained in their houses with their faces covered, and neglecting their usual occupations. They were clothed in sack-cloth, which was rent in token of mourning; they neither bathed nor attended to their personal appearance, and partook of their meals seated on the ground. Their customary daily prayers were during this time omitted; and no one spoke to them, even to offer consolation, unless the mourners had spoken first. The females sat together, with the wife or daughter of the deceased in the centre of the group; and listened to one, who repeated in a species of chant, the praises of the departed. Sometimes the greater part of the females rose and ran about with wild screams, as if mad with grief, while the chief mourner remained

in her place, beating her breast and tearing her hair. Persons were hired to take a part in these lamentations, and music also was introduced, especially in accompanying the funeral procession. Trumpets were used at the burial of an aged person, flutes at the interment of the young. Thus our Saviour, when he entered the house of Jairus, found the minstrels (flute-players) and the people making a noise.*

It was forbidden in the law that mourners should disfigure themselves by wounding their flesh with their nails or otherwise.† Mourning in general rendered those who engaged in it temporarily unclean in the eye of the law; and on this account it was prohibited to the high priest, to assume the garments or customs of mourners even on the death of his nearest relatives.‡

The body was commonly buried soon after death; no coffin was used as among us, but the corpse was wrapped in linen, and carried to the tomb on a bier supported by four or six persons. This is worthy of notice, as shedding light on the miracle of Jesus at Nain,§ on the raising of Lazarus,|| and on the manner of our Saviour's own

* Matt. ix. 23.

§ Luke, vii 12.

† Lev. xix. 28.

|| John, xi. 44.

‡ Lev. xxi. 10, 11.

interment.* Aromatic substances, especially myrrh and aloes, were folded up with the corpse; but the practice of embalming, as in use among the Egyptians, does not appear to have been at any period prevalent in Judea.

In the earliest times, the universal custom among the Hebrews, of disposing of the body, was by burial; and the same was the case after their return from the captivity. But for a period extending from the time of king Asa to the captivity, the burning of the corpse was regarded as the most honorable mode. The body was laid on a couch, with quantities of aromatic substances, and all consumed together; the ashes were gathered, and in a suitable urn or case, deposited in the sepulchre.†

Though the use of separate graves, as among us, was by no means uncommon, the places of interment with the Hebrews were more generally sepulchres constructed under ground. These were frequently narrow caves, in other instances artificial excavations, and sometimes were hewn out out of the solid rock. Extensive excavations of this kind still exist on Mount Zion, known as the sepulchres of the kings. From an open court

* 1 John, xi. 5-7.

† 2 Chron. xvi. 14; xxi. 19.

the visiter enters seven successive rooms, in each of which are the remains of stone coffins or sarcophagi. The whole suite of apartments is cut out from the natural rock. By whom and at what period these caverns were constructed is uncertain; but the most probable conjecture assigns them to the age of the Herods.

It was customary among the Jews, to whiten their sepulchres annually, on the fifteenth of Adar, a month before the feast of the passover. The design of this was to render the tombs conspicuous, that they might be avoided, lest any should contract from them a legal defilement, which would interfere with their observance of the festival. From this custom may be illustrated the well-known allusion of our Saviour which was uttered at this period of the year, and probably with some of these whited sepulchres full in view.* The Mahometans have a similar custom of whitening their sepulchres a short time before the fast of Ramadan.

A armor and ensigns of authority were sometimes buried with the distinguished dead. Monuments too were erected over them, sometimes by relatives, sometimes by the public. Such monuments, in our Lord's time, the Jews raised in

* Matt. xxiii. 27.

honor of prophets, whose commands they disregarded.*

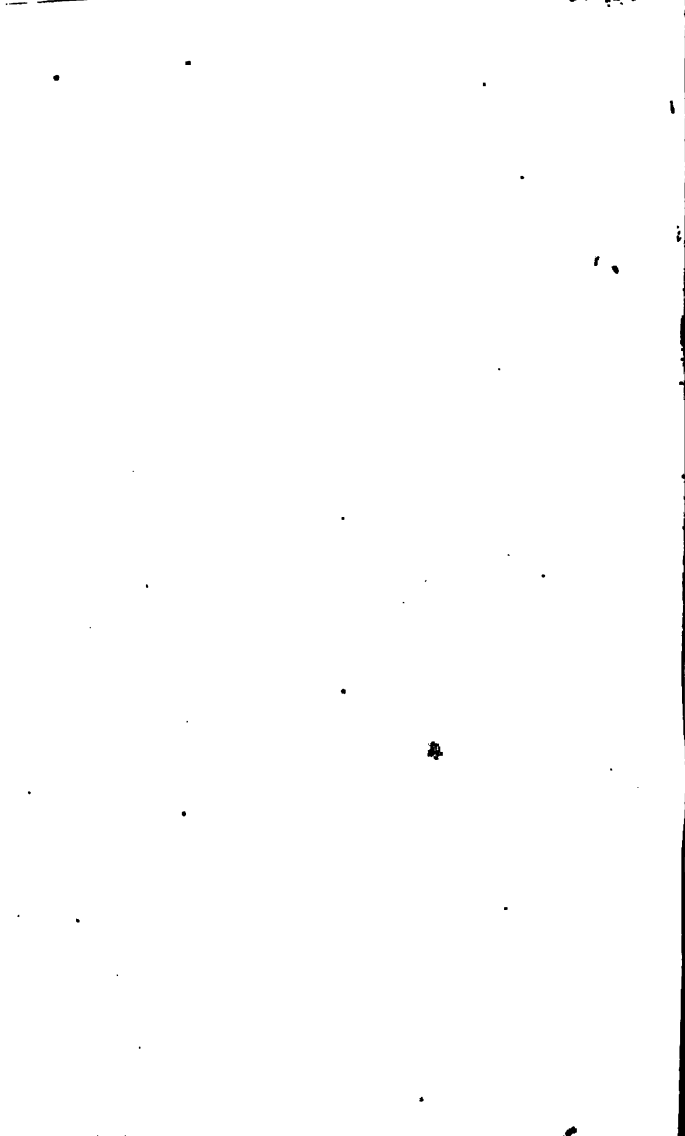
The family burial-places of the Israelites were frequently in their gardens. Such was the new tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, in which our Saviour was buried, and which from that circumstance became for ages the central point of interest in the Holy Land. To visit the sepulchre of Christ, pilgrims from every region thronged to Palestine ; in adorning that sepulchre, princes bestowed their wealth ; in gaining and defending it, nations lavished their blood. That spot does not retain in our view the importance which superstition formerly attached to it. We seek not "the living among the dead ;" but we contemplate the scenes where our Saviour lived and suffered, that we may gain strength to follow him in the path of righteousness, leading to the mansions whither he has gone before.

* Matt. xxiii. 29.











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